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Institutional Conditionality and State Compliance: The Czech and Slovak Accession to NATO and the EU

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THE CZECH AND SLOVAK ACCESSION TO NATO AND THE EU

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation studies the interaction between international institutions and nation states. More specifically, it examines how the membership conditionality of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) was adopted by candidate states. It uses the Czech and Slovak accessions to NATO and the EU to argue that, in order to understand the external phenomenon of conditionality, we need to study its effects within states. Critical to this process is national leadership. National leaders determine whether and how conditionality is implemented. Furthermore, this dissertation asserts that successful compliance with NATO and EU conditionality is decisively determined by the extent to which leaders perceive compliance with institutional norms and rules to be in their interest, as well as by the extent to which their normative stance is aligned with the norms contained within NATO and EU conditionality. Elites favorably disposed towards membership are a *sine qua non* for successful compliance with conditionality.

The case studies offer a detailed analysis of the dynamics of the accession process in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. What becomes apparent is the failure of either a purely rationalist or a purely constructivist explanation to capture the empirical phenomenon of compliance with conditionality. Neither approach can adequately accommodate the mix of material and ideational preferences that drives a state's response

to conditionality. This dissertation therefore advocates the employment of a more comprehensive analytical approach that transcends the traditional dichotomy between the two schools of thought and takes both rational and normative motivations of state behavior into consideration in order to explain the complexity of state behavior.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANO	Alliance of the New Citizen
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CE	Council of Europe
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
ČMKOS	Czech-Moravian Commission of Trade Union
ČSAV	Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences
CSCE	Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
ČSFR	Czech and Slovak Federal Republic
ČSSD	Czech Social Democratic Party
DEÚS	Democratic Union of Slovakia
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
ESDI	European Security and Defense Identity
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HZDS	Movement for a Democratic Slovakia
IFOR	Implementation Force
KDH	Christian Democratic Movement
KDU-ČSL	Christian and Democratic Party-Czechoslovak People's Party
KSČM	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia
KSS	Communist Party of Slovakia
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MK	Hungarian Coalition
MKDH	Christian Democratic Movement
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NP PRENAME	National Program for Preparation for NATO Membership
ODA	Civic Democratic Alliance
ODS	Civic Democratic Party
OF	Civic Forum
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
Phare	Poland and Hungary, Aid for the Reconstruction of Economies
PfP	Partnership for Peace
RSS	Agrarian Party of Slovakia
SDK	Slovak Democratic Coalition
SDKÚ	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union
SDĽ	Party of the Democratic Left
SFOR	Party of the Hungarian Coalition
SMK	Party of the Hungarian Coalition x

SNS	Slovak National Party
SOP	Party of Civic Understanding
SPR-RSČ	Movement for the Republic-Czechoslovak Republican Party
SV	Free Choice
UN	United Nations
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
US	Freedom Union
VPN	Slovak Public Against Violence
WEU	Western European Union
ZRS	Workers' Party of Slovakia

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War changed the geopolitical dynamics in Europe. The "Iron Curtain," the artificial divide between East and West, ceased to exist, and the nations of Europe found themselves struggling to adapt to the new reality and become a unified continent. By the same token, the two main international institutions in Europe – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) – found it necessary to refocus their missions with regard to Central and Eastern Europe and to intensify relations with the post-communist countries that had recently embarked upon the road of democratization and economic transformation.

Following a period of extensive debates, both NATO and the EU decided to engage the Central and Eastern European countries through various cooperative partnerships and, ultimately, through the prospect of membership.[1] The process was marked by several important milestones that eventually led to two rounds of NATO enlargement (in 1999 and 2004) and two rounds of EU enlargement (in 2004 and 2007).[2]

This dissertation follows the format requirements of *The Chicago Manual of Style* 14th edition by The University of Chicago Press. The translations from foreign language sources are those of the author.

[1] For NATO and EU enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe, see for example Peter Duignan, *NATO: Its Past, Present, and Future* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2000); George W. Grayson, *Strange Bedfellows: NATO Marches East* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, c1999); Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in NATO* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, c1999); Gerald B. H. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1998); Zoltan D. Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion: Four Case Studies* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Marise Cremona, ed., *The Enlargement of the European Union* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Karen Henderson, ed., *Back to Europe: Central and Eastern Europe and the European Union* (London; Philadelphia: UCL Press, 1999); Michael J. Baun, *A Wider Europe: The Process and Politics of European Union Enlargement* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, c2000); and Peter A. Poole, *Europe Unites: The EU's Eastern Enlargement* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003).

[2] NATO enlarged three times prior to the 1999 enlargement. The original members include Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, United

The NATO and the EU enlargement processes have been driven by the two institutions, which have set up rules and regulations that must be met by any nation wishing to become a member. These conditions for membership require a response on the part of the applicants. This dissertation uses the process of compliance with NATO and EU membership conditionality on the part of the candidate states from Central and Eastern Europe to shed light on the intersection of international and domestic politics. More specifically, it is concerned with how domestic politics adjusts to international pressure. The dissertation argues that in order to understand the external phenomenon of conditionality, we need to study its effects within states. Critical to this process is national leadership of the candidate countries. Furthermore, this study asserts that successful compliance with NATO and EU conditionality is decisively determined by the extent to which leaders perceive compliance with institutional norms and rules to be in their interest, as well as by the extent to which their normative stance is aligned with the norms endorsed by NATO and the EU.

By examining the process of compliance with conditionality, this study aims to provide a better understanding of the process of enlargement and the challenges as encountered by the applicants and addresses the larger debate in international relations theory concerning the systemic and subsystemic levels of analysis.[3] It claims that while

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Kingdom, and the United States. In 1952, Greece and Turkey became members; Federal Republic of Germany joined in 1955; and Spain followed in 1982. The European Union enlarged four times prior to the 2004 round – in 1973 from the original six member states (Belgium, West Germany, Luxembourg, France, Italy, and the Netherlands) to include the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark; in 1981 to embrace Greece; in 1986 to take in Portugal and Spain; and in 1995 to incorporate Austria, Finland, and Sweden.

[3] For a foray into the issue of linkages between the international and domestic levels of analysis, see Jeffrey T. Checkel, "International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide," *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 4 (1997): 473-495; Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis, Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda," *International Studies Review* 2 (Spring 2000): 65-87; and Michael Zurn and Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Getting

the systemic-level explanations matter, examination of domestic processes is crucial to our understanding of how the external phenomenon of conditionality is translated into the domestic phenomenon of compliance.

This dissertation also seeks to contribute to the theoretical debate between the rationalist and constructivist schools of thought regarding the optimal approach to the issues of interests and norms. It joins the growing body of literature that calls for overcoming the competition between the two schools and instead looking for points of complementarity in order to better capture the richness the empirical phenomena.[4] It is important to disentangle these dynamics not only to promote dialogue across approaches within the field, but also to shed light on how a combination of interests and norms informs states in formulating their policies in response to institutional pressure.

State behavior is complex, and it poses a challenge for a single theory to explain how states derive their choices. As the case studies on conditionality and compliance demonstrate, the two rivaling explanations – systemic and value-based – both have a real explanatory power. However, adhering to only one explanation for the sake of parsimony carries the risk of serious gaps in our understanding of state behavior. Rational choice scholars argue that the adoption of NATO and EU conditionality stems from the applicants' perception of membership as a vehicle for the realization of their interests. Scholars from this camp do not acknowledge the importance of processes such as

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Socialized to Build Bridges: Constructivism and Rationalism, Europe and the Nation-State," *International Organization* 59 (Fall 2005): 1045-1079.

[4] Regina Karp, "The Conditionality of Security Integration: Identity and Alignment Choices in Finland and Sweden," in *Security Strategies, Power Disparity and Identity: The Baltic Sea Region*, ed. Olav F. Knudsen, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007): 45-71; Frank Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Heather Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power: Europeanization through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); and Wade Jacoby, *The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO: Ordering from the Menu in Central Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

socialization, learning, identity formation, and behavior based on the logic of appropriateness.[5] Constructivist scholars, on the other hand, reject the notion of rationalist self-interest of instrumental actors pursuing predefined interests and material benefits, and instead stress the process of internalization of norms and rules and the shaping of identities through socialization, learning, and persuasion.[6] An acknowledgement of the interaction of the two approaches has the potential to recount a more complete story.

This study uses the NATO and EU membership bids on the part of the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic to gain insight into institutional conditionality and the processes of domestic compliance with conditionality. The comparison between the Czech Republic and Slovakia is a very useful and relevant one. The two countries displayed very similar characteristics as a result of 75 years of shared history (with the exception of the World War II period) between 1918, when the state of Czechoslovakia was formed, and 1993, when the country dissolved peacefully. Contrary to expectations, however, the two countries' paths to NATO and EU membership diverged in the second half of the 1990s. While the Czech Republic joined NATO in 1999, Slovakia's entry into NATO was delayed until 2004. Moreover, the two countries experienced significant differences before achieving the reward of EU membership. These two case studies lend

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[5] For a rationalist argument on norms serving interest, see Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Frank Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe: Rational Action in an Institutional Environment," *European Journal of International Relations* 6, no. 1 (2002): 109-139; and Andrew Moravcsik and Milada Vachudova, "National Interests, State Power, and EU Enlargement," *East European Politics and Societies* 17, no. 1 (2003): 42-57.

[6] For a constructivist argument, see Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, ed., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996); Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Identity in a Democratic Security Community: The Case of NATO," in *The Culture of National Security*, ed. Peter Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 359-99; and Jeffrey T. Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework," *International Organization* 59 (Fall 2005): 801-826.

themselves very well to the analysis of conditionality and the processes and actors involved in translating it on the domestic level. The cases also serve to demonstrate the linkages between interests and norms.

BACKGROUND

NATO and EU enlargement to countries from Central and Eastern Europe was a historic decision, as it bridged the east-west divide in Europe. However, this lofty goal was accompanied by many practical obstacles that needed to be addressed before enlargement could take place. Specifically, both institutions wanted to ensure that the future new members would be able to adapt, adhere to the values and ideals that characterize these institutions, such as democracy and rule of law, and to contribute to the missions of the two organizations. The 40-odd years between the end of World War II and the string of revolutions in 1989-1990 were characterized by drastically different developments on the two sides of the iron curtain. While Western Europe continued to move toward democracy, the rule of law, and a market economy, Eastern Europe experienced the tyranny of communist regimes that left deep scars not only in the areas of governance, economy, and standard of living, but also in regard to personal freedoms, free will, independent thinking, and the role of the state in the life of the individual.

This barrier raised by the divergent post-World War II experiences had to be overcome, and mechanisms had to be put in place to ensure a successful transition of the Central and Eastern European societies shaped by the communist legacy to the western model. The requirements of such a transition have been extremely difficult for the Eastern Europeans, and it is of great significance that so much progress has been

achieved in such a short time period: In March 1999, less than ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, three former communist countries – Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic - joined NATO; five years later, in March 2004, NATO welcomed Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Romania as members. In May 2004, eight former communist countries – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia - became members of the EU;[7] and in January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania became the newest EU members.

This remarkable "rebirth" of Central and Eastern Europe has been a challenging process for all parties concerned, especially for the post-communist countries. The NATO and EU applicants from Central and Eastern Europe had to tackle extremely difficult tasks stemming from the need to close the gap between them and the members of the two institutions. Both NATO and the EU, in an effort to ensure the applicants' readiness and the ability to carry out the duties and responsibilities associated with membership, formulated a set of challenging criteria that had to be fulfilled prior to membership. These conditions were extremely challenging for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to meet. The process proved particularly demanding in the case of the EU, whose accession conditions are very complex and require the applicants to make adjustments in all spheres of policy, such as the economy, the judicial system, and banking. The applicants faced many formidable problems once they decided to pursue membership, and they encountered significant setbacks along the way, as exemplified by Slovakia's democratic deficit, Poland's struggle with agricultural reform, and Bulgaria and Romania's limited success in curbing corruption.

[7] Cyprus and Malta were also part of the 2004 EU enlargement.

As international institutions consider applications for membership, they devise criteria whose fulfillment by the applicant state is necessary for membership to be granted. These criteria serve to ensure that any new member of the institution can meet the existing standards, is able to contribute to the mission of the institution, and does not pose a threat to its functioning. The existing members, who often perceive new applicants, especially the poorer and less stable ones, as challenging and risky, have a vested interest in ensuring that prospective members are ready to support the institution, are able to carry out the responsibilities of membership, and will either increase or not jeopardize the current members' membership benefits.

Fulfilling the requirements of NATO and EU membership is especially challenging in comparison with other international institutions. According to Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, any new NATO member has to be able to "further the principles of the Treaty" and "contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area."[8] These principles include the building of peaceful and friendly international relations via the members' free institutions, promoting stability, and supporting economic cooperation amongst the members. Moreover, the proper functioning of NATO as a security organization requires from its members a certain level of military readiness and interoperability.[9] Similarly, the complexity of the EU framework necessitates that any new member be able not only to absorb the technical and institutional requirements of being a part of the EU, but also to contribute to the building of "peace, stability,

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[8] NATO, "The North Atlantic Treaty," *NATO Basic Texts*, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/treaty.htm (accessed April 30, 2007).
[9] NATO Public Diplomacy Division, "Backgrounder: Interoperability for Joint Operations," (July 2006), http://www.nato.int/docu/interoperability/interoperability.pdf (accessed April 30, 2007).

prosperity, democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the European space."[10] The membership requirements devised by the international institutions have been termed "institutional conditionality."

Institutional Conditionality and Compliance Defined

Institutional conditionality, in a general sense, is the strategy of an international institution to promote compliance with institutional rules and norms on the part of national governments. It entails international institutions offering certain privileges and national governments enacting policies to gain those privileges. International institutions provide assistance – usually financial or technical - to national governments to help them fulfill the specific tasks. In this process, certain domestic actors and processes are key to our understanding of how conditionality is translated into domestic politics. In this context, political leaders play a crucial role. They serve as conduits between the international level represented by conditionality and the domestic level of compliance. In the case studies that follow, the leaders of the candidate states respond to conditionality as defined in NATO's 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement" and the EU's 1993 Copenhagen Criteria.[11] As discussed in greater detail in Chapter II, both NATO and EU

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[10] European Commission, "EU Enlargement: One Policy, Many Projects!" http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_en.htm (accessed April 21, 2007).

[11] NATO, "The Study on NATO Enlargement," *NATO Basic Texts* (September 1995), http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/enl-9501.htm (accessed August 31, 2007); European Council, "European Council in Copenhagen 21-22 June 1993 - Conclusions of the Presidency," http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/72921.pdf (accessed January, 29, 2007). For responses to NATO and EU conditionality, see Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Compliance and Conditionality," *ARENA Working Papers* (2000), http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/wp00_18.htm (accessed May 1, 2007); James Hughes, Gwendolyn Sasse, and Claire Gordon, "Conditionality and Compliance in the EU's Eastward Enlargement: Regional Policy and the Reform of Sub-national Government," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 42, no. 3 (September 2004): 523–551; Frank Schimmelfennig, Stefan Engert, and Heiko Knobel, "Costs, Commitment and Compliance: The Impact of EU Democratic Conditionality on Latvia, Slovakia and Turkey," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 41, no. 3 (June 2003): 495–518; Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*; and Angel Angelov, "The Policy of NATO Conditionality: The Cases of

conditionality is concerned with not only the functioning of the two institutions and the fulfillment of their missions, but also with the norms of democracy and human rights.

Compliance is defined as "the extent to which agents act in accordance with and in fulfillment of the conditions prescribed by international institutions."[12] In this study, compliance is understood as the domestic-level response to institutional conditionality. As Chapter II demonstrates, compliance, just like conditionality, has been approached from both the rationalist and the constructivist perspective. It is, therefore, necessary and relevant to incorporate the discussion of the concept of compliance and the way it relates to norms and interests within the framework of this dissertation.

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, INTERESTS, AND NORMS

As stated above, this dissertation looks at the linkages between the international and domestic levels, as represented, respectively, by institutional conditionality and domestic compliance. In this framework, national leaders are the agents who act as the link between the two levels through the pursuit of their interests and the norms they profess. The traditional, i.e. rationalist, understanding and use of conditionality is closely linked to interest, whereas the constructivist explanations tend to stress the role of norms and socialization.

National Political Leadership

This dissertation understands national political leadership as those individuals who have a decisive effect on the domestic political process. These include presidents,

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Bulgaria and Romania," *Eurojournal* (April 2004), http://eurojournal.org/files/angel.pdf (accessed September 5, 2008).

[12] Checkel, "Compliance and Conditionality."

prime ministers, members of cabinets and parliaments, party leaders and leaders of the opposition, and military leaders. More generally, leadership can be defined as "a process of social influence through which an individual enlists and mobilizes the aid of others in the attainment of a collective goal."[13] An effective leader (1) must be perceived by other members of the group as having a special status and as a "credible and legitimate source of influence;" (2) motivates his or her followers and enables them to work toward the attainment of the common goals; and (3) manages the efforts of the group in order to use the collective resources to the maximum effect in the pursuit of the common goal.[14]

An "effective" leader does not necessarily mean a "good" leader in the ethical sense. In fact, history is replete with excellent leaders who were very effective in achieving their goals or the goals of their particular group, yet were authoritarian, oppressive, and even destructive. This has to do with the fact that the term leadership is often associated with other concepts, mainly power, interest, influence, and authority. Various combinations and permutations of these concepts then help determine whether a leader is "good" or "bad" in both practical and moral terms. Good leaders, in the ethical sense of the word, are those individuals that are highly committed to excellence, ethics, and engagement.[15] They have the capacity to have a vision, to act upon their vision, and

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[13] Michael A. Hogg, Robin Martin, and Karen Weeden, "Leader-Member Relations and Social Identity," in *Leadership and Power: Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*, ed. Daan van Knippenberg and Michael A. Hogg (London, UK; Sage, 2003), 20.

[14] Martin M. Chemers, "Leadership Effectiveness: Functional, Constructivist and Empirical Perspectives," in *Leadership and Power: Identity Processes in Groups and Organizations*, ed. Daan van Knippenberg and Michael A. Hogg (London, UK; Sage, 2003), 6-7.

[15] Lynn Barendsen and Howard Gardner, "The Three Elements of Good Leadership in Rapidly Changing Times," in *For the Common Good: The Ethics of Leadership in the 21st Century*, ed. John C. Knapp (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2007), 21.

to possess "a conceptual and ethical foundation on which difficult – sometimes, excruciating – trade-offs…have to be made."[16]

Chapter III describes how the different backgrounds and development of the Czech and the Slovak leadership following the "Prague Spring" of 1968, the brief period of political liberalization, have affected the post-1989 Czech and Slovak leadership.[17] While the Czech elites were purged, the Slovak elites were handled more leniently, and many of its members were allowed or chose to collaborate with the communist regime. The difference in the treatment of the Czech and Slovak elites in 1968 determined the makeup of the post-1989 leadership: In the Czech Republic, the communist elite was largely replaced by the former dissidents and émigrés; in Slovakia, many former communists remained part of the leadership, mainly for a lack of alternatives. This dissertation argues that the Czech and Slovak leaders' post-1968 and post-1989 divergent ideological formation and perception of communism influenced their predispositions in regard to the question of what constituted good leadership and caused the Czech and the Slovak adoption of the NATO and EU conditions to follow different paths.

It has also been argued that political leadership opportunities are "highly contextual."[18] In other words, leaders do not act in a vacuum but rather in response to external stimuli, such as the current political atmosphere, the legacy of their predecessors, public opinion, and constitutional constraints. They also act on the basis of internal

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[16] Erik R. Peterson, "Scanning More Distant Horizons," in *For the Common Good: The Ethics of Leadership in the 21st Century*, ed. John C. Knapp (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2007), 20.
[17] On the differences between the Czech and the Slovak elites and the way these differences played a key role in the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, see Gil Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites: From Prague Spring to the Breakup of Czechoslovakia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).
[18] Tim Haughton, *Constraints and Opportunities of Leadership in post-Communist Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 10.

factors, such as upbringing and education.[19] This dissertation considers conditionality to be yet another external stimulus to which leaders in the applicant states respond. Moreover, interests and norms are also a part of this context. These interests and norms are both internal to the particular leader, and they are also external to the actor, as they are encompassed in the domestic political context and the international context of NATO and EU conditionality.

Interests

In general, interests are understood as preferences or motivations and can be categorized as collective or individual interests. Collective interest in the sphere of international relations is usually referred to as national interest. National interest can be defined as the interests of the people. However, in practice, national interest is often reduced to the interests of the most powerful actors. This is, in fact, the understanding of realist scholars.[20]

According to constructivists, interests are influenced not only by external threats and the demands of domestic interest groups, but also by internationally shared norms and values.[21] National interests are "not merely normative guidelines for action, but causal powers that predispose states to act in certain ways."[22] States have objective interests, such as security and survival, as well as subjective interests. To illustrate,

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[19] Ibid., 10.
[20] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 118; Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1948, 6th ed., 1993); and Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*.
[21] See Martha Finnemore, *National Interest in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); and Risse-Kappen, "Identity in a Democratic Security Community: The Case of NATO."
[22] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 234.

Alexander Wendt modifies the realist view of interest by adding a fourth interest to physical survival, autonomy, and economic well-being – that of "collective self-esteem." Collective self-esteem is "a group's need to feel good about itself, for respect or status," and it is tied to a self-image, which can be positive or negative.[23]

Norms

Norms can be defined as shared expectations about appropriate behavior held by a community of actors.[24] Constructivists study norms as independent variables that can explain state behavior. Norms can function as rules and have a "constitutive" effect by specifying "what actions will cause relevant actors to recognize a particular identity." They can also assume the form of standards and have a "regulative" effect by prescribing "the proper enactment of an already defined identity." In short, norms "either define (or constitute) identities or prescribe (or regulate) behavior, or they do both."[25]

Rationalist scholars view socialization based on norms as yet another feature of the pursuit of interest. In the case of nations seeking NATO and EU membership, the rationalist view holds that the adoption of institutional norms is merely the means by which these states attain the benefits of security (NATO) and prosperity (EU). Moreover, rationalists have claimed that NATO and the EU have succeeded in promoting their norms only because the states who have adopted those norms did so for reasons unrelated to the pressures of conditionality.[26]

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[23] Ibid., 236.
[24] Finnemore, *National Interest in International Society*, 22.
[25] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security," in *The Culture of National Security*, ed. Katzenstein, 5.
[26] Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe," 111.

The case studies illustrate the shortcomings of applying a single theoretical approach to explain such a complex phenomenon as the enlargement of NATO and the EU. Norms and interests interact in the process of compliance with conditionality. The leaders who are involved in devising policies in response to conditionality do not exist in a vacuum. When forming policies, they react to domestic and international developments, their interests and interests of their constituencies, as well as the norms that they endorse and that they are to satisfy through compliance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PROPOSITIONS

On the general level, this dissertation aims at answering the following questions: *How do international and domestic politics interact? How is institutional conditionality adopted by candidate states? Is the process of conditionality compliance interest-driven or norm-driven? How do interests and norms interact*? This dissertation does not address the question of whether norms matter, as this once controversial concept has been widely accepted by international relations scholars, with the exception of the hard-core neorealists. Rather, this dissertation examines the ways in which norms interact with interests in the domestic arena.

The study uses the NATO and EU accession experiences of the Czech Republic and Slovakia to address these general questions as well as the following case-specific question: *Why, in light of the significant similarities between the two countries in the areas of culture, economy, and society, did the Czech Republic and Slovakia experience such differences in the process of complying with NATO and EU conditionality*?

The study proposes that institutional conditionality is not a one-way process whereby states simply adopt what the international institution presents to them. It requires certain conditions to be in place within the candidate states. In this sense, we can speak of "domestic conditionality." This domestic conditionality determines whether and how institutional conditionality is actually satisfied by the candidate states. Domestic conditionality is, in turn, significantly shaped by national leadership, since it is the country's leaders who decide on a course of action in response to institutional conditionality. Leaders function as an intervening variable between conditionality and compliance due to their ability to shape policies on the domestic level. They are the transmission belt for the transfer of conditionality to compliance because they can either enhance or hinder the process of compliance by implementing or blocking policies aligned with conditionality.

Furthermore, this dissertation proposes that the state's response to conditionality entails the interplay of interests and norms, as both motivate policy choices. Changes necessitated by conditionality are most easily implemented if they are aligned with the interests of national leadership and if the leadership perceives compliance as "the right thing to do." However, compliance is unlikely to occur if it threatens to undermine the interests of leaders or if the normative framework is not in place to support the often difficult and painful changes necessitated by the NATO and EU accession process. Leaders function as a filter for interests and norms by advocating some and rejecting others, thus determining the balance between them that is reflected in state behavior.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Ability and willingness to adopt the conditions imposed by NATO and the EU on the domestic level is the most important step in a country's quest for membership. It is, therefore, necessary to examine carefully the process of how states respond to institutional conditionality and to identify the main factors that lead to the success or failure of compliance with institutional conditionality on the state level.

The literature has identified several variables that either encourage or hinder domestic compliance with institutional conditionality. Compliance is affected by the level of attractiveness of the international institution in the eyes of the applicant as well as by the readiness and ability of the nation-state to implement institutional norms and rules.[27] Furthermore, compliance is affected by the credibility of the institution and the legitimacy of the conditionality.[28] A state is unlikely to comply if it does not believe the institution will uphold its end of the bargain, i.e. the granting of membership. Moreover, the consistency with which the institution applies its norms across the board, i.e. to both current and prospective members, affects compliance. Compliance also tends to be influenced by how clearly conditionality is defined and by the level of guidance provided regarding the implementation of the conditions, be it in the form of monitoring, advising, or technical assistance.[29]

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[27] See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 887-917; Cortell and Davis, Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms."

[28] See Judith Kelley, "International Actors on the Domestic Scene: Membership Conditionality and Socialization by International Institutions," *International Organization* 58, no. 3 (2004): 425-457; Judith Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe: The Power of Norms and Incentives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); and Milada Anna Vachudova, *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage and Integration since 1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[29] See Heather Grabbe, "How Does Europeanization Affect CEE Governance? Conditionality, Diffusion and Diversity," *Journal of European Public Policy* 8 (2001): 1013-31; and Ronald Linden, ed., *Norms and*

Further and more systematic examination of conditionality is very pertinent, as there are many countries that are currently interested in joining the two organizations. Several of the would-be members have struggled to prove to NATO and the EU they are ready to become members or even for negotiations to start, as exemplified by Ukraine's political uncertainties, Serbia's stance on the independence of Kosovo, or the push-pull tendencies of Turkey's secularism and Islamism. By the same token, NATO and the EU have not always been successful in their attempts to influence the candidates' domestic developments, as represented in the specific case of Slovakia. It would, therefore, be beneficial to understand how and why states respond to the conditions and incentives put out by NATO and the EU, as this understanding could shed light on why some countries have taken a more direct route to membership while others have struggled to fulfill the necessary requirements. Moreover, a study of the adoption of institutional conditionality might help answer questions relating to the durability of institutional conditionality after membership is achieved.

A significant amount of research has been undertaken in the study of the EU and the way this institution influences the behavior of applicants through its conditionality, a process often referred to as Europeanization.[30] However, most of these studies have looked at conditionality in single-country case studies or have compared the effects of conditionality in cases selected in an *ad hoc* manner.[31] Furthermore, many studies have concentrated on specific issues in the negotiation process, such as certain chapters of the

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Nannies: The Impact of International Organizations on the Central and East European States (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002).

[30] Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*; Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, "When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change," *European Integration online Papers* 4, no. 15 (2000), http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-015a.htm (accessed April 26, 2006).

[31] Schimmelfennig, Engert, and Knobel, "Costs, Commitment and Compliance."

EU's *acquis communautaire*,[32] or on a single case study and the specific domestic-level phenomena that have influenced the accession process of a particular candidate, such as Euroscepticism[33] and party politics.[34] Even though such research has provided valuable insights into the intricacies of EU enlargement and Europeanization, much could be gained from a more systematic examination of cases characterized by similar background that would enable drawing broad-level conclusions regarding the way in which institutional conditionality works or does not work on the state level. This dissertation proposes that the Czech and the Slovak accessions to NATO and the EU lend themselves to such an examination and provide for new knowledge about the acceptance of conditionality on the domestic level that could be applied in a more general way.

The literature on NATO's conditionality is limited. In fact, most of the NATO enlargement literature concentrates on the decision-making process within NATO in regard to the decision to include Central and Eastern Europe in the enlargement process. Studies of the influence of NATO conditionality on the national-level debates in the applicant countries are few, and the individual case studies tend to be narrow,

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[32] Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, eds., *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

[33] Karen Henderson, "Euroscepticism or Europhobia: Opposition Attitudes to the EU in the Slovak Republic," *SEI Working Paper* 50 (April 2001): 1-30, http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/documents/wp50.pdf (accessed April 26, 2006); Sean Hanley, "Party Institutionalisation and Centre-Right Euroscepticism in East Central Europe: The Case of the Civic Democratic Party in the Czech Republic" (paper prepared for presentation at the 29th ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Turin, Italy, March 22-27, 2002), http://www.essex.ac.uk/ECPR/events/jointsessions/paperarchive/turin/ws25/Hanley.pdf (accessed April 14, 2006).

[34] Aviezer Tucker, Karel Jakes, Marian Kiss, Ivana Kupcova, Ivo Losman, David Ondracka, Jan Outly, and Vera Styskalikova, "From Republican Virtue to Technology of Political Power: Three Episodes of Czech Nonpolitical Politics," *Political Science Quarterly* 115, no. 3 (Autumn 2000): 421-445; Tim Haughton, "What Role has *Europe* Played in Party Politics in Slovakia?," *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 75-86; Karen Henderson, "EU Influence on Party Politics in Slovakia" (paper delivered to the EUSA Conference, Austin, Texas, March 31-April 2, 2005, http://aei.pitt.edu/3201/02/Austin,Henderson.doc (accessed April 8, 2006); Geoffrey Pridham, "The European Union's Democratic Conditionality and Domestic Politics in Slovakia: The Mečiar and Dzurinda Governments Compared," *Europe-Asia Studies* 54, no. 2 (March 2002): 203-227.

concentrating namely on the military aspects of compliance.[35] Some scholars have concentrated on NATO's post-Cold War experience with enlargement, but have failed to address the mechanisms of domestic change.[36] Others have employed either the rationalist[37] or the constructivist[38] arguments without giving consideration to the possibility that both approaches may be valid.

This dissertation claims that a study examining the convergence of rational choice and constructivist theories can provide valuable insight into institutional conditionality in general and that of NATO and EU conditionality in particular. As stated above, comparing the Czech and Slovak accession processes is a particularly logical choice. As Chapter III demonstrates in greater detail, the two countries have displayed many similar characteristics, especially in the areas of institutional structure and economic and social development, stemming from geographical proximity and shared history. Following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, they started their NATO and EU accession runs from closely aligned positions. It would, therefore, be logical to expect that the Czech and Slovak Republics would follow similar paths in their quest for NATO and EU membership and would respond to the conditionality of the two institutions in a similar way. However, as recent history has shown, this assumption was faulty.

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[35] Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald, eds., *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2001); Karel Tesar, *Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague* (Groningen, the Netherlands: CESS, 2000), http://www.cess.org/publications/harmoniepapers/pdfs/harmoniepaper-12.pdf (accessed September 7, 2007); Miroslav Tůma, *Relics of Cold War: Defence Transformation in the Czech Republic* (Stockholm, Sweden: SIPRI 2006), 25, http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRIPP14.pdf (accessed February 13, 2008); and Mário Nicolini, "Slovakia One Year after NATO Entry: From National to Collective Interest (and Back)," *Eurojournal* 11 (2005): 6, http://www.eurojournal.org/files/Nicolini_Mario_-_Slovakia_1_Year_After_NATO_Entry.pdf (accessed May 28, 2008).

[36] Celeste Wallander, "Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO after the Cold War," *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (2000): 705-735.

[37] Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe."

[38] Alexandra Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the 'New Europe,'" *International Organization* 59 (Fall 2005): 973-1012.

Political development after the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (ČSFR) split on 1 January 1993 took a different course in each of the newly independent states.[39] While Prague continued to undertake reforms to enhance democracy, the rule of law, and the market economy, Bratislava fell behind in the period 1993-1998 under the leadership of Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar. These developments were reflected in the two countries' NATO and EU accession experiences. The Czech Republic became a NATO member in the first wave of NATO's post-Cold War enlargement in 1999 and was consistently one of the frontrunners for becoming an EU member. Slovakia, on the other hand, was left out of the 1999 NATO enlargement and struggled considerably on its way to EU membership until the parliamentary elections of 1998 brought a new government into power that was keen on getting Slovakia back on the road of democratization and economic reform.

Therefore, two questions come to mind: Why was there not greater similarity in the Czech and the Slovak NATO and EU membership bids? And why did the two countries differ in their responses to NATO and EU conditionality, in regard to the implementation of the necessary requirements and reforms?

METHODOLOGY

As stated previously, this dissertation examines the intersection of international and domestic politics, represented by conditionality and compliance, respectively. It concentrates on the level of the candidate states by analyzing how the conditions of NATO and EU membership were adopted in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In a

[39] For the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, see Jiří Musil, ed., *The End of Czechoslovakia* (Budapest: Central European University Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Abby Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye* (New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001).

sense, the two institutions are considered a "black box," in that the study does not investigate the intrainstitutional mechanisms leading to the definition of membership conditionality and the processes of enlargement. For this reason, the discussion of the similarities and differences between NATO and EU conditionality is limited to the summary provided in this chapter. The absence of a more detailed analysis of NATO and EU conditionality is further warranted by the fact that this dissertation centers on the democratic aspects of NATO and EU membership conditionality, which is a point of great synergy between the two institutions.

This study uses content analysis as the primary methodology to evaluate the alignment of interests and norms on the part of the leadership with the rules and norms of NATO and EU conditionality. It analyzes sources such as the speeches given by the Czech and Slovak leaders, party platforms, and government declarations to demonstrate actors' preferences and attitudes, while keeping the possibility of instrumentalization in mind. Furthermore, this dissertation employs the method of process tracing, which takes the timing of events and actions into consideration when evaluating behavioral changes. NATO and EU conditionality was characterized by several milestones that influenced the level of compliance on the part of the applicant states. These milestones were represented by summits and other major decision-making points, such as the EU Regular Reports evaluating the progress in compliance and the issuance of critical statements by NATO and EU bodies and member-states representatives regarding lack of compliance.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO LITERATURE

This dissertation makes several important contributions. First, it fills a gap in the literature on international institutions by shedding light on the ways in which international institutions and nation-states interact, as well as the ways in which the enlargement process develops in the context of domestic politics. By the same token, it speaks to the level of analysis debate in international relations theory. It points in the direction of the removal of the traditional division of international relations into international and domestic levels and the addition of normative variables to the study of international relations in order to make the complex interaction between the various levels more intelligible and improve our ability to explain real-world phenomena and puzzles.[40] As such, it is distinct from much of the existing international institutions literature, which tends to look for explanations that are grounded in a single theoretical framework.[41] While these individual approaches are certainly valid, their explanative power is insufficient to account for the empirical phenomena in the area where the institutional and domestic realms intersect, and they thus miss important insights.

Furthermore, by studying conditionality and the role of interests and norms in the process of compliance with conditionality, this study also enriches the debate between the rationalist and constructivist camps of international relations theory. The case studies

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[40] For a primary argument against analyzing domestic factors and the individual, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959). For a primary example of integrating domestic and international factors (in this case in the area of international negotiations), see Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," in *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, ed. Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson, and Robert D. Putnam (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993): 431-468. See also Peter J. Katzenstein, "International Relations and Domestic Structures: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States," *International Organization* 30 (Winter 1976): 1-45; and Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978).

[41] For an example of the use of more than one paradigm, see Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, "Japan, Asian-Pacific Security, and the Case for Analytical Eclecticism," *International Security* 26, no. 3 (Winter 2001/02): 165-193.

suggest interests and norms are closely linked in the process of national compliance with NATO and EU conditionality. While the case studies confirm the primacy of interest in the process of becoming a member of NATO and the EU, they also demonstrate that norms have an important effect on the process of domestic compliance with institutional conditionality.

Finally, the dissertation makes a contribution on the empirical level. The case studies provide insights into one of the most interesting post-Cold War enlargement puzzles by looking at two very similar countries that had very different experiences before achieving the same end-state represented by membership in NATO and the EU.

This dissertation has several limitations that stem primarily from the relatively limited scope of the research contained within it. First, this dissertation purposely refrains from addressing the debate on the significance of international institutions in world politics and the effect that international institutions have or do not have on international politics. This topic is simply beyond the scope of research contained within this dissertation, as its aim is not to discuss international institutions in general but to investigate a specific issue that characterizes international institutions and their interactions with nation-states.

Furthermore, the research concentrates on NATO and EU conditionality alone, disregarding other international organizations. It centers on the most stringent type of conditionality, i.e. membership conditionality, and omits the less demanding types of cooperation conditionality from the discussion. Thus, it does not provide an overview of the ways in which nation-states react to the conditionality of other institutions, such as the United Nations or the World Bank. This is due to the fact that NATO and the EU are,

in a way, special cases, with very specific guidelines as to what constitutes conditions for membership. Therefore, the lessons-learned from the case studies might not be applicable to situations where other institutions or other forms of conditionality are involved.

Moreover, the research does not aim at explaining NATO's and the EU's eastern enlargement policies, and it refrains from discussing the NATO and EU member-states' politics of enlargement and the process by which the two institutions established their conditions for membership. It does not, therefore, deal with theories of enlargement. In this sense, institutional conditionality is considered a constant, and debates within NATO and the EU on developing the particular conditions of membership are disregarded. Instead, this dissertation concentrates on the processes that were in place after the conditions were established and analyses these processes from the perspective of the candidate countries. On the empirical level, it concentrates on the Czech and Slovak NATO and EU accession processes and thus disregards what happened on the level of the institutions prior to the decision on enlargement being made.

While the scope of this dissertation is too narrow to address many other important issues related to the interaction of the institutional and the domestic levels and to NATO and EU enlargement, it raises many pertinent questions that are deserving of further research. For instance, this dissertation encourages examination of developments on the domestic level in the period after NATO and EU membership is achieved, as well as the durability of changes initiated by compliance with institutional conditionality in the period after membership is achieved. Similarly, it would be beneficial to look into how the recently admitted member-states have been able to accept and absorb the costs that they accrued during the accession process. As recent developments across the new

NATO and EU members demonstrate, membership in NATO and the EU does not guarantee the continuation of the positive developments in democratization, the rule of law, and economic transformation initiated by the accession process.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation contains seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter II lays out the conceptual framework and methodology that govern the research in this dissertation. It defines and explains conditionality and the closely associated concept of compliance and reviews the main tenets of rationalist and constructivist understanding of conditionality. While rationalist theory concentrates on cost-benefit analysis driven by consequentialist logic of behavior, the constructivist approach advances the logic of appropriateness as the motivation behind the applicant states' willingness to comply with the rules and norms of international institutions. Following this general discussion of conditionality, Chapter II describes the specific features of NATO and EU conditionality. It also provides a preliminary discussion on the role of the candidate countries' leadership as the connective tissue between conditionality and compliance. Finally, it offers hypothesis regarding the likelihood of compliance with NATO and EU membership conditionality based on the alignment of the interests and norms upheld and advocated by the leaders with the rules and norms endorsed by NATO and the EU.

Chapter III serves as the background for the discussion of the differences between the Czech Republic and Slovakia in their paths to NATO and EU membership by surveying the historical experiences of the two nations and highlighting the similarities

and differences between them in the cultural, social, and economic areas. This survey, which covers three distinct time periods — pre-Czechoslovakia, Czechoslovakia, and the years following the 1993 split of the common state, pays special attention to the Czech and Slovak experiences with statehood and communism. These experiences played a formative role in the development of Czech and Slovak post-communist leaders, which in turn influenced the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and EU.

Finally, this chapter also provides an overview of the evolution of Czechoslovak foreign and security policy and the national debates regarding NATO and EU membership. It places these debates in the context of the discussions on enlargement within NATO and the EU in the early to mid-1990s in order to provide a perspective on the development of NATO and EU membership conditionality and the complexity of the enlargement process.

Chapters IV, V, and VI are the case study chapters that seek to shed light on the theoretical questions raised within this dissertation, namely the effects of institutional pressure in the form of NATO and EU membership conditionality on domestic politics in the candidate states, as well as the interaction of norms and interests in the process of compliance with conditionality. Chapters IV and V deal with the Czech Republic's accession to NATO and the EU, respectively. Similarly, Chapter VI is a case study of the Slovak route to NATO and EU membership. The chapters analyze the development and nature of Czech and Slovak post-communist leaders that led to the differences in the two countries' accession to NATO and the EU.

Chapters IV and V show the existence of a consensus among the key Czech leaders and major political parties on the need and desirability to secure the country's

membership in NATO and EU membership. This consensus was based on both rational prerogatives, namely security and economic advancement, and normative grounds, rooted in the democratic and pro-western legacy of the interwar period and the anti-communist dissent. The Czech case study provides a detail account of the interest-based and normative arguments regarding the country's accession to NATO and the EU as they were raised in the high echelons of Czech politics and in the dialogue between leaders and the population.

Chapter VI describes the struggle of Slovakia to form a consensus that would allow for compliance with NATO and EU conditionality in the 1990s. Slovak leadership was characterized by the presence of many former communists in positions of power who continued to advocate anti-reform and illiberal policies. As a result, Slovakia lacked the normative framework necessary for establishing a clear direction toward democratization and NATO and EU membership. The chapter exposes the gap separating the rhetoric and the actual policies of the successive coalitions led by Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar in the period 1993-1998. Mečiar and his supporters were more interested in solidifying their political and economic power than in ensuring Slovakia's integration into the NATO and EU structures, leading to a clash with the principles of NATO and EU democratic conditionality and the resulting temporary absence of Slovakia from European integration. As in the Czech case studies, this chapter provides an exhaustive account of the interest-norm dynamic in Slovakia's decision-making prior to membership.

The concluding chapter, Chapter VII, relates the evidence from the case studies to the interaction of international pressure and domestic politics and the two main theoretical approaches evaluated in this dissertation – rationalism and constructivism. It

identifies the following key lessons: (1) the centrality of the domestic processes and particularly leadership for compliance with institutional conditionality on the part of the NATO and EU candidate states, and (2) the interaction of interests and norms in the process. The case studies highlight the role of national leadership in the process of adopting institutional conditionality on the domestic level and confirm the link between successful domestic adoption of conditionality and the right "mix" of norms and interests. Due to the nature of compliance with conditionality, which requires top-down decision-making and implementation of policies, successful compliance with conditionality is firmly rooted in the presence of leaders favorably disposed toward membership and willing assume the responsibility of instituting policies aligned with NATO and EU membership conditionality.

The case studies confirm the recent trend in international relations theory endorsing the broadening of parsimonious theoretical approaches in order to increase explanatory power. The case studies of the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and the EU demonstrate that states evaluate both material and ideational objectives and priorities. As a result, separating rational choice and constructivism leads to explanations that fall short of capturing the richness and complexity of empirical phenomena. The research contained in the discussion that follows confirms the need to employ theories that take the connections between the material and the ideational into consideration. Recognizing the interaction of norms and interests has the potential to produce new insights into the complex behavior of nation-states.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The discussion of conditionality falls under the general theory of cooperation and, more specifically, into institutionalism. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss institutional conditionality in greater detail, placing the concept of conditionality within the context of the wider international relations theory literature, and examining the main characteristics of conditionality in general and of NATO and EU conditionality in particular, thereby laying the groundwork for the following chapters that deal with NATO and EU conditionality and its adoption in the Czech and the Slovak Republics. This chapter also addresses the issue of compliance with conditionality on the domestic level and the mechanisms of compliance, thus speaking to the debate in the literature on the merits of using the systemic approach or the subsystemic approach for analysis, represented by the rationalist and constructivist arguments, respectively. This chapter then also serves as an introduction to the discussion of interests and norms as the defining features of the two approaches within the framework of NATO and EU conditionality.

As this brief overview demonstrates, this chapter deals with several important theoretical concepts and their practical applications. A preview of the individual parts of this chapter might then facilitate the reader's orientation in the text as well as enhance the reader's awareness of the ways in which the concepts under examination fit together and serve the purpose of this dissertation.

This chapter is divided into six main sections. The first section provides an overview of various approaches to conditionality in the literature. The aim of this section

is to elucidate the development of the use of conditionality as well as the study of conditionality theory and linkages to other bodies of literature. Moreover, this section surveys the main characteristics of conditionality in preparation for a more detailed examination of NATO and EU conditionality. Conditionality, which is usually regarded as a rationalist concept, is contrasted with methods of normative pressure. This dissertation claims that due to the nature of NATO and EU conditionality, it is necessary to examine both conditionality and normative pressure in the same framework. This study, therefore, concentrates on both interests and norms as the representatives of the rationalist and normative approaches to determine what type of a "mix" of interests and norms is necessary or sufficient for successful compliance with conditionality.

The second section of Chapter II uses the findings from the previous section and applies them to NATO and EU conditionality. It pays special attention to the characteristics of conditionality and the way in which they are incorporated into the NATO and EU rules and regulations governing accession, with the aim of comparing NATO and EU conditionality with the general characteristics of conditionality. Such an examination is pertinent, since the nature of conditionality affects its effectiveness. NATO conditionality and EU conditionality are then compared, based on the following characteristics: *ex ante* and voluntary nature; strength, determinacy, and credibility of conditionality; size of the incentives; power asymmetry; availability of alternatives to the state; and the presence or absence of a gradual admission process.

The third and fourth sections discuss the development of NATO and EU conditionality throughout the history of the two institutions. It concentrates on the conditions put in place for the post-Cold War enlargements in Central and Eastern

Europe, as captured in NATO's 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement" and EU's 1993 Copenhagen Criteria. Moreover, it describes the benchmarks of the accession process of the two institutions and the way these tie back to the characteristics of conditionality.

The fifth section studies the domestic-level response to institutional conditionality — compliance. This dissertation's emphasis on the role of domestic-level variables, particularly that of domestic leadership, in the success of the compliance effort is such that it terms compliance "domestic conditionality." The significance of this is that this dissertation advocates examining subsystemic variables along with systemic variables and both rationalist and constructivist explanations in order to achieve a fuller account of the puzzle, i.e. the interaction between institutional pressure and domestic-level responses

The last section strives to contribute to this fuller account by providing a framework for the study of conditionality and compliance based on an integrated consideration of both interests and norms and the way that these are evaluated by and assimilated into the decision-making of the political leadership. This dissertation claims that both the interests and norms of domestic leaders had to be satisfied in the process of compliance with institutional conditionality. The resulting mix of interests and norms determined the degree of ease or difficulty that characterized the compliance process, as summarized in the hypotheses presented at the end of the section. These hypotheses speak to conditionality and compliance and the interest-norm dynamic on a general level, while using the Czech and Slovak case studies as an illustration of this dynamic.

INSTITUTIONAL CONDITIONALITY IN PERSPECTIVE

Institutional conditionality is the strategy of an international institution to promote compliance with institutional rules and norms on the part of national governments. Conditionality is characterized by the use of incentives on part of international institutions: if national governments comply with the necessary requirements, they are rewarded. The ultimate reward granted to the NATO and EU applicants by the two organizations is, of course, membership; the ultimate punishment for noncompliance is non-membership.

International institutions express conditionality in various ways, depending on their mission. Conditionality has been traditionally associated with international aid organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, who have used "aid conditionality" to tie aid to the improvement of monetary policies and institutions in borrowing countries.[1] The goal of these international financial organizations was to help the aid recipients manage their balance of payments and repay the loans. This type of conditionality is sometimes referred to as "first generation" conditionality where the institutions did not strive to influence the domestic policies and politics of the recipient countries in the area of democratic governance.[2]

The use of conditionality has grown following the end of the Cold War, and the nature of conditionality has changed. This "second generation" of conditionality has been characterized by growing involvement in the domestic politics of the recipient countries. International institutions, namely the Council of Europe (CE), the Organization for

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[1] Carlos Santiso, "Governance Conditionality and the Reform of Multilateral Development Finance: The Role of the Group of Eight," G8 Governance Working Paper 7 (2002): 16, http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/governance/santiso2002-gov7.pdf (accessed 1 May 2007).
[2] Angelov, "The Policy of NATO Conditionality."

Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO, and the EU, started paying attention to issues such as democratic institutions, free elections, good governance, and human rights, and began linking aid to the fulfillment of political reforms within the recipient countries. In the wake of these developments, international relations scholars began examining the concept of conditionality in their study of how these organizations have attempted to influence policies and developments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.[3] This dissertation strives to contribute to this body of literature by examining and comparing the effects of NATO and EU conditionality in the case of the Czech and the Slovak Republics and, more specifically, by analyzing closely how interests and norms espoused by country leadership encouraged or hindered compliance.

Conditionality in the Literature

Conditionality traditionally falls under the rationalist set of explanations. According to the rationalist view, actors are utility-maximizers who calculate the costs that they might incur and benefits that they might gain as a result of changing their behavior. In other words, they respond to the incentives and sanctions issued by international institutions in such a way as to maximize their payoffs.

Conditionality is one of the mechanisms of interaction between institutions and nation states. Scholars have been drawing a distinction between the mechanism of conditionality and the mechanism of normative pressure. Normative pressure is a process in which "an institution advises a government on the direction a policy should take,

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[3] For an example of comparing the effect of conditionality of the EU, the CE, and the OSCE, see Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*. For a discussion of NATO and EU and the concept of emulation in the Czech Republic and Hungary, see Jacoby, *The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO*.

offering no reward other than the approbation of the institution."[4] In other words, the international institutions rely on norms to persuade, praise, or shame the domestic actors into changing policies. Conditionality, on the other hand, explicitly links the policy of compliance to an incentive, such as developmental aid or membership. With membership conditionality, there is a direct link between the domestic policy change and the reward of membership offered by the international institution. This dissertation examines the use of membership as an incentive and studies how domestic actors, specifically leadership, react to conditionality and thereby shape domestic policies.

Normative pressure is a type of socialization, which can be defined as "a process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community."[5] Socialization covers several other methods and processes besides normative pressure, such as norm transfer, persuasion, and learning. The change of behavior on part of actors being targeted by socialization has been explained differently by rationalist and constructivist scholars. Constructivists argue that the behavioral changes are based on the change in the actor's beliefs. Socialization is understood as a process in which the socializers target the socializee's definitions of identity and interests.[6] Successful socialization entails the internalization of the institutional norms and rules, leading to behavior based on the logic of appropriateness. However, according to rationalist explanations, normative pressure can lead to norm compliance and behavior change not because of internalization but

[4] Kelly, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 3.
[5] Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe,"
[6] Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization," 976.

because the domestic actors calculate the benefit of the adoption of norms for the purpose of reputation and other benefits of future exchange.[7]

These various treatments of conditionality are indicative of the authors' location in the spectrum of international relations theory.[8] While it is generally accepted that social interaction changes behavior, the constructivist argument that change in behavior occurs endogenously as a result of change in the normative characteristics and identity of an actor is controversial. The systemic approach to international relations, as represented by neorealism and institutionalism, rejects the notion that an actor's behavior changes as a result of normative shifts caused by learning, persuasion, and other mechanisms. The systemic approach claims any change of behavior is caused by the role of the exogenous constraints and the cost-benefit analysis of the actor. The practice of treating conditionality and normative pressure as two distinct and essentially unrelated phenomena also stems from studying institutions that do not have the same institutional pull or attractiveness in the eyes of nation states in the same context. Thus, while an analysis of conditionality and normative pressure in the context of the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and the UN might warrant the separation of the two types of influence, such a separation in the context of NATO and the EU is artificial and unnecessary, since normative pressure constitutes an integral part of NATO and EU conditionality.

The literature suggests the division of institutional mechanisms into those of normative pressure and of conditionality. Tools of normative pressure include official statements and declarations of opinion, guidance issued as a result of fact-finding

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[7] Frank Schimmelfennig, "The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union," *International Organization* 55, no. 1 (2001): 47-80.
[8] For a discussion of socialization and various international relations approaches, see Alastair Iain Johnston, "Treating International Institutions as Social Environments," *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (2001): 487-515, esp. 488-494.

missions, assistance provided by legal experts in policy formation, provision of recommendations on general standards for laws, field offices and ad hoc visits by representatives of the institutions and officials from member states, participation of applicant' officials in institutional forums, and twinning (presence of NATO and EU officials in the applicants' ministries and public administration). The tools associated with conditionality are gate-keeping (access to different stages in the accession process), benchmarking and monitoring of the applicants, and the actual negotiations.[9] This study argues, however, that the tools traditionally associated with normative pressure, such as official statements and declarations, can be treated as mechanisms of conditionality in the case of NATO and the EU. NATO and EU's normative pressure and conditionality mechanisms are so closely intertwined that their separation is not warranted. For example, the demarches issued by the EU in response to the undemocratic actions taken by Slovakia's Mečiar government, combined with the absence of visits by highly ranked EU officials, were a part of the broader EU strategy to solicit change of behavior on the part of the Slovak government. Furthermore, both institutions strive to not only change behavior on the part of the applicant states but also to change their preferences in order to make these changes internal and therefore more permanent. Conditionality and normative pressure must be treated as two parts of a whole in the EU and NATO case.

The majority of studies have concentrated on individual mechanisms of institutional influence on states, or they have centered on one particular institution or issue area. Recently, however, studies have appeared that have explored the integration of mechanisms. For example, Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane have argued that

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[9] Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 20; see also Grabbe, "How does Europeanization Affect CEE Governance?"

instrumental rational actors use ideas as indicators of how they can best achieve their interests under the conditions of uncertainty.[10] On the other hand, constructivist scholars have acknowledged the coexistence of normative and instrumental action. For example, Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink argue that instrumentalization may be the primary process at play in the early stages of socialization and that it can even trigger the socialization mechanism.[11] Finally, Judith Kelley's *Ethnic Politics in Europe* is an excellent example of such integration efforts. Kelley examines the connections between conditionality and normative pressure and the way the two mechanisms functioned in bringing about policy change in Latvian, Estonian, Slovak, and Romanian treatment of minorities.

This dissertation contributes to the either /or vs. both/and debate between rationalist and constructivist scholars by examining more closely the interplay between norms and interests. It takes into consideration the rationalist argument, which claims that norm conforming behavior stems from the actors' desire to maximize their interests rather than from the logic of appropriateness. Furthermore, it strives to enhance our understanding of the interaction between conditionality and socialization processes further by exploring the ways in which domestic actors - and particularly leadership - influence domestic policies under the conditions of institutional influence.

Main Characteristics of Conditionality

It is important to preface this section by stating that there are different types of conditionality, ranging from conditionality tied to a particular aspect of behavior to the

[10] Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).
[11] Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norms Dynamic and Political Change," 284.

comprehensive character of NATO and EU conditionality. The above mentioned aid conditionality as well as conditionality related to human rights and arms control are just a few examples of the issue-specific conditionality used by international institutions Membership conditionality is the most stringent type of institutional conditionality, as it demands the greatest level of cooperation on the part of the actors interested in membership. Membership conditionality often necessitated the implementation of very dramatic changes across all areas of the domestic system, such as the economy, the judiciary, and the civil bureaucracy.

Conditionality has two primary characteristics - it is *ex ante* and voluntary in nature. The conditions are set in advance by the international institution, and the states that are interested in achieving the benefits stemming from compliance have no or only very limited capacity to affect those conditions. The voluntary aspect lies in the fact that it is the prospective members who approach the institutions and demonstrate their desire to join. In other words, the institutions do no solicit potential new members. Moreover, it is the sole responsibility of the applicants to adjust their policies to the demands of conditionality. The applicants are responsible for applying the provisions of conditionality into practice across their domestic systems. The failure to meet these conditions precludes the state from obtaining the desired reward. These two principles of conditionality are generally accepted by both rationalist and constructivist scholars. However, this is where the proponents of the two camps part, with rationalists stressing the importance of incentives, sanctions, and strategic calculation in the process of compliance and the constructivists giving explanatory power to socialization-based efforts, such as learning.

Rationalist Approach to Conditionality

The rationalist approach to conditionality assumes that actors are utility-maximizers who act based on exogenous, self-interested political preferences. They weigh the costs and benefits of compliance in order to optimize their interests. Conditionality is then rooted in the logic of consequentialism, and it does not concern itself with whether actors change their beliefs in conjunction with changing their behavior.

The "external incentives model" proposed by Frank Schimmelfennig and Guido Schwellnus serves as a primary example of the rationalist approach, and it offers an additional set of characteristics of conditionality.[12] Even though their framework reflects their focus on EU conditionality, it is also applicable to the general discussion of conditionality. According to Schimmelfennig and Schwellnus, conditionality works "if the benefits...are sufficiently conditional, determinate, credible and high that they exceed the domestic costs of compliance..."[13]

In regard to membership conditionality, the strength of conditionality has to do with how closely a reward is dependent on compliance with specific conditions. Conditions that are repeatedly stressed and monitored by the institution are stronger than those that are not emphasized and observed. Determinacy, also referred to as clarity, of conditionality has to do with how it is formulated. Conditions can be stated with lesser or greater ambiguity. Credibility is determined by both the promise of membership and the

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[12] Frank Schimmelfennig and Guido Schwellnus, "Political Conditionality and Convergence: The EU's Impact on Democracy, Human Rights, and Minority Protection in Central and Eastern Europe" (paper prepared for the CEEISA Conference, Tartu, Estonia, June 25-27, 2006): 1, http://www.eup.ethz.ch/people/schwellnus/papers/Schimmelfennig_Schwellnus.pdf (accessed May 1, 2007).

[13] Ibid., 3.

threat of not becoming a member if rules and norms are not adopted by the applicant. According to Schimmelfenning and Schwellnus, the clearer the conditions and the more explicit the implementation demands, the higher the effectiveness of conditionality. Finally, the size of the incentives can range from low to high, with high incentives, of course, providing the strongest encouragement to comply.

Other scholars have added additional variables to explain the success or failure of conditionality. These are power asymmetry between the institution and the state and the availability of alternatives to the state. It is quite obvious that the power asymmetry between NATO and the EU on the one hand and the applicants on the other hand is great. While it would be simplistic to state that the organizations have nothing to gain from enlargement, the benefits granted to the applicants and eventual members, such as prosperity and security, far outweigh the benefits gained by the international organizations. In other words, the applicants depend on the organizations a lot more than the organizations depend on them. NATO and the EU could then use credible threat of exclusion as leverage.

The lack of viable alternatives for the applicants from Central and Eastern Europe has also made NATO and EU ever more desirable in the eyes of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. While cooperative frameworks and other options existed, be it the OSCE, the Visegrad group, neutrality, Russia, and bilateral cooperation, there were no competitors to what NATO and the EU had to offer to the Czech and the Slovak Republics.

In regard to membership conditionality, it has been demonstrated that the presence or absence of a gradual admission process also affects the effect of

conditionality on a nation state. A gradual admission process enhances credibility of conditionality by putting in place "a gradual payoff structure in the form of a tiered admission process."[14] This process rests on the following rationale: "Clear, gradual steps add more political weight to admission process decision points, because real consequences can flow from them. Subsequently, any meeting, report, or event related to the process of moving closer to the reward of membership provides opportunities for "dangling the carrot" while also addressing outstanding issues."[15]

Constructivist Approach to Conditionality

Constructivists reject the concentration on material benefits in their explanations of the motivations underlying the process of conditionality compliance, and they propose socialization as the means by which applicant states adopt the rules and norms of the international institutions.[16] Socialization entails the notion of the actor following the logic of appropriateness rather than that of consequence, while disregarding the material incentives or the possible sanctions. Alexandra Gheciu's *NATO in the "New Europe"* is the primary recent example of the study of the effects of socialization by an international institution. From the examination of the interaction between NATO and countries of Central and Eastern Europe, more specifically the Czech Republic and Romania, Gheciu concludes that that "...the alliance became systematically involved in socializing the

[14] Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 46.
[15] Ibid., 46.
[16] Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe," 804.

latter into adopting a particular definition of liberal democracy and building specific, Western-prescribed institutions in their politics."[17]

Scholars distinguish between Type I and II of internalization/socialization: Type I is characterized by the actors learning about what type of behavior is acceptable within the particular community and acting in accordance with expectations of a particular behavior, no matter whether they like the role. Type I behavior is then based on role playing. With Type II, the actors adopt the norms and rules of the organization as the right thing to do and they take it for granted. They might adopt not only the norms, rules, and interests, but also the identity of the organization.[18]

Jeffrey T. Checkel identifies the following mechanisms of socialization: Strategic calculation, role playing, and normative suasion.[19] With strategic calculation, states act in a rational and instrumental way, and they adjust their behavior to the rules and norms of the institution in order to maximize their interest. This mechanism is then an example of Type I socialization. Role playing also falls under the Type I category, as compliance with norms and rules is nonreflective in nature. In other words, agents are rational actors who adopt roles that are appropriate in a particular situation or setting, but without reflective internalization taking place. Gradually, adopting certain roles might become a matter of habit. Finally, normative suasion sees agents as being "communicatively rational," having interests and preferences that can be redefined, and as presenting arguments in an effort to persuade each other rather than calculating costs and benefits.[20]

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[17] Alexandra Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe:" The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, CA, 2005), 233.
[18] See Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe," 805.
[19] Ibid., 808-813.
[20] Ibid., 812.

When normative suasion takes place, actors internalize the new rules and norms, which falls under Type II of socialization.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Before discussing the main characteristics of NATO and EU conditionality, it will be helpful to briefly discuss the taxonomy of conditionality in the NATO and EU context, as the term can be accompanied by various qualifiers. NATO and EU conditionality may be divided into subsets. Both institutions have developed conditions that have been termed "political" or "democratic" conditionality. Political/democratic conditionality represents the set of conditions designed to encourage and facilitate the transition of the Central and Eastern European countries to a democratic system. They have been stipulated in the 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement" and EU's 1993 Copenhagen Criteria. Furthermore, EU conditionality also has a subset termed "membership conditionality" or "*acquis* conditionality," which is linked to the 31 chapters of the *acquis communautaire*. Finally, there are qualifiers of conditionality used to distinguish the type of actors that conditionality targets. Thus, we speak of intergovernmental reinforcement when state actors are targeted by conditionality. When societal actors are being targeted, we speak of transnational reinforcement.

As discussed in the section above, institutional conditionality has the following characteristics that influence its effectiveness vis-à-vis nation-states: *ex ante* and voluntary nature; strength, determinacy, and credibility of conditionality; size of the incentives; and power asymmetry. In addition, the success of conditionality can vary based on the availability of alternatives to the state and the presence or absence of a

gradual admission process. The following section evaluates NATO and EU conditionality based on the aforementioned criteria.

Ex Ante and Voluntary Nature of Conditionality

NATO and EU conditionality is characterized by its *ex ante* and voluntary nature. Both NATO and the EU have formulated their expectations (discussed below in greater detail) for new members and made clear they would have to be fulfilled prior to membership being granted. As far as the voluntary aspect is concerned, the main conditionality strategy on part of NATO and the EU is reinforcement by reward. The emphasis of NATO and EU conditionality is on the carrots rather than the sticks, with membership representing the ultimate carrot and the threat of not becoming a member being the ultimate stick. This strategy avoids both the coercion and large-scale support of non-compliant states.

Strength, Credibility, and Determinacy of Conditionality

In regard to the issues of strength, determinacy, and credibility of conditionality, there are differences between the two institutions. The strength and the credibility of conditionality was high for both NATO and the EU, as both institutions emphasized the conditions, monitored compliance, and made it clear that membership would not be granted unless conditions for membership were met. The Slovak case serves as an especially pertinent example of how strong and credible both NATO and EU conditionality was. Both institutions as well as individual member states issued a series of official communiqués criticizing Slovakia's democratic deficit. Moreover, Slovakia was

barred from the 1999 NATO enlargement and was left out from the group of countries with whom accession negotiations were launched at the Luxembourg European Council in December 1997.

While the conditionality of both NATO and the EU was strong, the degrees of determinacy differed. The EU conditionality vis-à-vis the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was much more developed and explicit than that of NATO, which has to do, of course, with the sheer magnitude of the *acquis* and the changes that the *acquis* necessitates within the various spheres of the domestic systems of the applicants. Moreover, the EU's large bureaucracy allowed for closer monitoring of compliance within the national systems, as captured in the Regular Reports, issued annually by the European Commission and detailing the progress and shortcomings of each applicant in adopting the Copenhagen Criteria. NATO conditionality, on the other hand, was "more modest and much more informal," with NATO showing "much more deference to the institutional traditions of its member states" than the EU.[21] To illustrate, NATO's interoperability condition did not specify any quantitative or qualitative targets to be met by the applicants.[22] Furthermore, NATO's small bureaucracy did not allow for as detailed evaluation of domestic transformation efforts as was the case with the EU Regular Reports.[23] Nevertheless, based on the experience gained in the 1999 enlargement, NATO made conditionality more strenuous for the next round, as demonstrated by introducing the Membership Action Plan in April 1999 in an effort to provide assistance, advice, and feedback mechanisms to the countries aspiring to join NATO.

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[21] Jacoby, *The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO,* 119.
[22] NATO, "Study on NATO Enlargement," para. 45.
[23] Jacoby, *The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO,* 120.

Size of Incentives

The size of the incentives for NATO conditionality and EU conditionality was also dissimilar. On the general level, the ultimate incentive of membership was very strong in the eyes of the applicants for both NATO and the EU. However, membership in the EU was seen as a more valuable prize, with NATO membership being considered a stepping stone toward EU membership. Of course, the security benefits of NATO membership were indisputable, with NATO providing a degree of security that individual states would find hard to achieve on their own, especially as the applicants' financial and personnel resources for modernization of their armed forces were limited. Moreover, the desirability of NATO membership was enhanced by the organization serving as a forum for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to interact with the United States. Yet the extra incentives provided by the EU in the form of significant, long-term financial assistance had a particularly powerful motivating effect in regard to compliance, especially since the flow of money did not stop with membership. Unlike with NATO financial assistance, which came primarily in the form of bilateral assistance from individual member states[24] and where the new NATO members paid most of the cost of bringing their armed forces and military facilities up to NATO standards, [25] the EU flow of funds grew as membership was coming closer and continued after membership was

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[24] Ibid., 120.

[25] For the debates on the cost of enlargement, see Congressional Budget Office, "The Costs of Expanding the NATO Alliance," *CBO Papers* (March 1996), http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/46xx/doc4682/1996Doc25.pdf (accessed October 5, 2007); Richard L. Kugler, "Costs of NATO Enlargement: Moderate and Affordable," *Strategic Forum* 128 (October 1997), http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/SF128/forum128.html (accessed October 5, 2007); David C. Gompert, "NATO Enlargement: Putting the Cost in Perspective," *Strategic Forum* 129 (October 1997), http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/SF129/forum129.html (accessed October 5, 2007); and Lary L. Geipel, "The Cost of Enlarging NATO," in *Two Tiers or Two Speeds? The European Security Order and the Enlargement of the European Union and NATO*, ed. James Sperling, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999): 160-178.

achieved. Overall, the EU provided the applicants with a more comprehensive set of incentives for compliance than NATO, with the EU representing the ultimate confirmation for the Central and Eastern European applicants of their "return to Europe."

Asymmetry

The two "tools" of conditionality are accompanied by power inequality between NATO and the EU on one side and the candidate countries on the other. This inequality is, especially in the case of Central and Eastern European countries, characterized by an asymmetry of interdependence, with the two institutions having much more to offer to the applicants than the applicants had to offer to the institutions.[26] The financial assistance provided by the EU, NATO's security umbrella, and the general stabilizing nature of both NATO and the EU represent only a few examples of the benefits of membership. Furthermore, the applicants generally desired membership more than the two institutions desired new members.

The applicants lacked the economic resources to bargain their way into membership, as illustrated by the fact that for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, 50% to 70% of their trade was with the EU in the 1990s, while the EU's trade with them accounted for less than 5% of the total.[27] Moreover, the applicants did not have the capacity to threaten either organization with costs of non-enlargement, such as economic crisis and domestic instability.[28] As a result, power inequality enhanced both the pre-determined nature of NATO and EU conditionality from the perspective of the candidates and its voluntary nature.

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[26] Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*, 52; and Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*, 108-110.
[27] Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe*, 61.
[28] Ibid., 46-47.

The asymmetry between the two institutions and the applicants resulted in NATO and EU's leverage over the enlargement process. This leverage was both "passive" and "active."[29] Passive leverage is the "attraction of...membership" that precedes any formal invitation for membership.[30] Potential members adjust their policies without the institutions applying any type of pressure in order to achieve a change of behavior. Compliance happens "merely by virtue of...existence and usual conduct" of the institution. Active leverage, on the other hand, represents "deliberate policies," with NATO and the EU stipulating the terms of membership and developing mechanism to encourage compliance on the part of the candidates.[31] NATO and the EU have defined the rules and norms of membership in the "Study on NATO Enlargement" and the Copenhagen Criteria. The evaluation of candidate countries, captured in the most dramatic fashion in the Regular Reports issued by the European Commission, functioned to strengthen the leverage of the two institutions.

Availability of Alternatives

The power asymmetry in the relationship between the two institutions and the applicants was enhanced by the lack of viable and credible alternatives to NATO and EU membership. Most of the applicants were small countries that would find it difficult to provide security on their own. Moreover, they were not interested in the renewal of the Warsaw Pact. Finally, a new alliance of several countries of Central and Eastern Europe would have been difficult to build, as demonstrated by the collective action problem

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[29] The concept of "active" and "passive" leverage is defined from the EU perspective in Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*. This study uses the concept for both the EU and for NATO.
[30] Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*, 4, 63.
[31] Ibid., 4.

experienced by the four-member Visegrad Group, and would have ended up as only a second-best option to NATO membership. Similarly, the alternatives to EU membership were bleak. Given the challenging economic transformation that all of Central and Eastern Europe was experiencing, combined with Russia's financial crisis in the 1990s and other promising trading partners, namely the United States and Japan, being too far away, EU was option number one.

Gradual Admission Process

As the discussion in the section that follows on the specifics of NATO and EU conditionality demonstrates, gradualism has been a component of both the NATO and the EU conditionality strategies in regard to the Central and Eastern European applicants. NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework, introduced at the December 1993 NATO Summit by the United States, has been instrumental in bringing those countries that strive to become members closer to their goal. The Membership Action Plan (MAP), devised in 1999, enhanced the effect of gradualism for the countries that became part of the second post-Cold War enlargement. The EU's gradual admission process is even more intricate than that of NATO, primarily as a result of the very complex negotiations required to deal with all of the chapters of the *acquis*. Overall, the gradualist approach was both necessary and desirable – necessary in the sense of providing the candidates with assurances of progress and desirable in the sense of providing the NATO and EU member states with the time and opportunity to adjust to enlargement.[32]

[32] Schimmelfennig, "The Community Trap."

NATO CONDITIONALITY IN PRACTICE

NATO is a military organization whose membership conditions reflect its military responsibilities, as well as its commitments to democracy and the rule of law. The enlargement policies of NATO in Central and Eastern Europe have been aimed at stabilizing the region. In its 1991 "Strategic Concept," NATO recognized that it was in danger of being negatively affected by "the adverse consequences of instabilities that may arise from the serious economic, social, and political difficulties, including ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes, which are faced by many countries in Central and Eastern Europe." NATO became aware that these crises, exemplified by the wars in the Balkans, the Chechen rebellion, and the tensions in the Caucasus, could spill over to the territories of NATO members.[33]

NATO acknowledged early on the need to engage the countries that were formerly behind the Iron Curtain. The Alliance saw this engagement not only as a security necessity, but also as a means for strengthening its *raison d'être* following the end of the Cold War, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.[34] Nevertheless, the member states were reluctant to admit new members quickly. The Alliance therefore devised a set of conditions that were designed to bring about the desired changes in the applicants for membership.

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[33] "The Alliance's Strategic Concept" was adopted at the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Rome on 7-8 November 1991. Quoted in Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 61.

[34] For the early discussion on NATO's post-Cold War existence, see Charles L. Glaser, "Why NATO is Still Best: Future Security Arrangements for Europe," *International Security* 18 (1993): 5-50; Robert B. McCalla, "NATO's Persistence after the Cold War," *International Organization* 50, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 445-475; Victor S. Papacosma and Mary Ann Heiss, eds., *NATO in the Post Cold-War Era: Does it Have a Future?* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995); Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997*; and Duignan, *NATO: Its Past, Present, and Future.*

NATO conditionality is not entirely a post-Cold War phenomenon. In fact, the fulfillment of political requirements preceded the accession of West Germany in 1955 and of Spain in 1982. Nevertheless, the political requirements were secondary to the security imperatives during the Cold War enlargements.[35] The situation was dramatically different for both the 1999 and the 2004 rounds of enlargement.

According to the NATO eastern enlargement policy, the countries seeking NATO membership have to not only demonstrate their ability to adhere to the principles of the Washington Treaty, NATO's founding document, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area, but they also have to "meet certain political, economic and military goals" as provided in the 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement."[36]

The "Study on NATO Enlargement" is the defining document for NATO conditionality.[37] It stipulates the following conditions for membership:

- Functioning democracy based on a market economy;
- Fair treatment of minorities based on the guidelines of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE);
- Absence of any unresolved outstanding disputes with neighbors and commitment to the peaceful settlement of any disputes;
- Ability and willingness to contribute militarily to the Alliance and to pursue interoperability with other members' armed forces;
- Commitment to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures.

NATO used conditionality to elicit certain behavior, namely the transition to a democratic system of government and a market economy, creation of institutions to ensure democratic control of the armed forces, and modernization of the military to match the NATO standards. As stated above, the candidates did not have a significant

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[35] Thomas S. Szayna, *NATO Enlargement, 2000-2015: Determinants and Implications for Defense Planning and Shaping* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 17.
[36] NATO, "Enlargement: What Does this Mean in Practice?" *NATO Topics*; http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/in_practice.htm (accessed March 12, 2007). For "The Study on NATO Enlargement," see NATO, "The Study on NATO Enlargement."
[37] "Study on NATO Enlargement."

amount of bargaining power. Moreover, all along the process, NATO made it clear that compliance with the pre-accession criteria did not mean automatic membership and that it was NATO that would decide when and where enlargement would take place, thus increasing the power asymmetry between the Alliance and the candidates:

> Decisions on enlargement will be for NATO itself. Enlargement will occur through a gradual, deliberate, and transparent process, encompassing dialogue with all interested parties...Ultimately, Allies will decide by consensus whether to invite each new member to join according to their judgment of whether doing so will contribute to security and stability in the North Atlantic area at the time such a decision is to be made.[38]

NATO also used the gradualist approach in its enlargement process. While the multiple programs put in place by NATO were designed to aid the applicants in the accession process, they also provided benchmarks for determining whether the particular applicant was ready to move forward in the process. These vehicles have included the PfP framework and, for the second round of post-Cold War enlargement, the MAP.[39] The PfP and MAP represented both an open dialogue aimed at increasing transparency, consultation, and cooperation and the interest-driven nature of compliance as embodied in the desire for the future security benefits provided by the Alliance. Ultimately, NATO has used the prospect of membership to entice the countries from Central and Eastern Europe to reform their militaries, establish democratic and civilian control of the militaries, and enhance democratization.

The NATO accession process included the following stages: (1) becoming a partner in the PfP framework; (2) expressing an interest in joining the Alliance; (3) NATO recognizing the aspiration of a nation to join; (4) the applicant and a NATO team

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[38] Ibid., para 7.

[39] See Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997*; Joseph Kruzel, "Partnership for Peace and the Transformation of North Atlantic Security," in *NATO in the Post Cold-War Era*, ed. Victor S. Papacosma and Mary Ann Heiss (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995), 339-346.

of experts carrying out accession talks, whose aim is to determine whether the applicant has the willingness and the ability to meet the conditions of membership listed above; in this stage, resources, security, legal issues, and contribution to the NATO budget is being discussed; and (5) signing of Accession protocols, an invitation to accede to NATO, national procedures for membership (such as a referendum), and accession.

It is important to stress that NATO has tried to avoid self-binding effects in its conditionality policy. This is most clearly demonstrated in the PfP framework, according to which partner status does not guarantee membership. Paragraph 38 of the "Study on NATO Enlargement" states the following regarding the link between PfP participation and membership: "Active participation in PfP will play an important role in possible new members' preparation to join the Alliance, although it will not guarantee Alliance membership."[40] Once again, this stresses the fact that conditionality is driven by NATO and it is the Alliance that is in control of the process.

EU CONDITIONALITY IN PRACTICE

The process of national compliance with EU conditionality is often referred to as "Europeanization" in the literature. The term "Europeanization" has been given several different meanings.[41] It has been defined as the "downloading" of EU policy to the domestic level and "uploading" of national preferences to the EU level, especially as it applies to pre-2004 enlargement member states, such as Germany and France.[42] Europeanization in the context of the Eastern enlargement has been understood as the process driven by the accession requirements. This rather mechanical process of adopting

[40] NATO, "Study on NATO Enlargement," para. 38.
[41] See Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*, 4-5.
[42] Ibid., 4.

accession requirements and EU policies and models has also been referred to as "EU-isation."[43]

However, Europeanization can also be viewed as a process whereby the applicants adopt the EU norms and rules in order to fulfill their desire to "return to Europe," overcome their communist past, and become modern nations. This constructivist understanding of Europeanization then encompasses both interest-driven and norm-driven behavior. This study regards Europeanization as "the domestic impact of the European Union."[44]

Similarly to NATO, the EU's enlargement efforts can be viewed primarily as a method to ensure peace and stability in Europe in the post-Cold War era. According to the European Commission, "All Europeans benefit from having stable democracies and prosperous market economies as neighbours. A carefully managed enlargement process extends peace, democracy, the rule of law and prosperity across Europe." [45] The European Commission assesses the applicants' ability to comply with the basic values of the EU and with the conditions for membership. According to the Treaty on European Union, "The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States."[46]

EU conditionality, particularly its democratic conditionality, has evolved significantly since the end of the Cold War era. It was first formulated in the Birkelbach

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[43] Ibid., 5.
[44] Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, "Introduction: Conceptualizing the Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe," 1.
[45] European Commission, "Myths and Facts about Enlargement" http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/questions_and_answers/myths_en.htm (accessed May 26, 2007).
[46] "Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union," *Official Journal of the European Communities* (December 24, 2002): Article 6.1, http://europa.eu/eur-lex/en/treaties/dat/EU_consol.pdf (accessed May 25, 2007).

report of the European Parliament in 1962 in response to Spain's desire to join the European Economic Community (EEC). Spain was denied membership due to the nature of Franco's regime. When Spain and Portugal joined in 1986, they were evaluated on the basis of rudimentary aspects of democracy, such as the nature of their constitutions and the existence of competitive elections, rather than the practical manifestation of democracy, i.e. treatment of minorities, presence of meaningful political opposition, etc.[47] Similarly, the first post-Cold War EU enlargement did not have to address democratic conditionality, as the applicant countries — Austria, Finland, Norway, and Sweden — were established democracies. However, the EU had already started elaborating the details of its democratic conditionality, as it was becoming increasingly involved in Central and Eastern Europe and as the calls for opening up the institution to new members became more numerous and louder.

The EU first established conditions for membership of the Central and Eastern European countries at the 1993 Copenhagen European Council. The so-called Copenhagen Criteria are composed of three areas – political, economic, and institutional:

- Political criteria: Stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.
- Economic criteria: Existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.
- Institutional criteria: Ability to take on the obligations of membership by transposing into national legislation and effectively implementing the Community *acquis*.[48]

Only when the political criteria, which are often referred to as "democratic conditionality," are fulfilled will the EU initiate accession negotiations with the candidate country, stressing the primacy of the EU's decision-making power in the enlargement

[47] Pridham, "The European Union's Democratic Conditionality and Domestic Politics in Slovakia."
[48] European Council, "European Council in Copenhagen 21-22 June 1993 - Conclusions of the Presidency."

process vis-à-vis the candidates. The EU Commission's opinions, first released in 1997, emphasized the political criteria. The need to fulfill the political criteria was stressed by the EU on multiple occasions, including the 1997 European Council Meeting in Luxembourg. Article 25 of the Presidency Conclusions state that "Compliance with the Copenhagen political criteria is a prerequisite for the opening of any accession negotiations."[49] Paragraph 63 of the Presidency Conclusions from the Cardiff Summit of June 1998 also stresses the need for the satisfaction of the Copenhagen Criteria.[50] *Acquis* conditionality then follows democratic conditionality.

The negotiations are conducted in bilateral accession conferences between the member states and each applicant, and they are centered on the 31 chapters of the *acquis communautaire*, the set of EU laws, rules, and regulations that each candidate has to adhere to in order to gain membership. These negotiations are highly asymmetrical in favor of the EU, and they usually entail dramatic adjustments and reforms in the applicant's political, economic, and social system.

The EU has been adamant about issuing membership invitations only to those countries that comply with its conditions. Annual reports have been the EU's primary tool for addressing concerns with the candidates' fulfillment of membership conditions. The EU has also used various declarations, demarches, and EU parliamentary resolutions. This trend started with the 1997 "Agenda 2000" and continued with the accession partnerships and commissions reports that appeared yearly. The EU has also used other

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[49] European Council, "Presidency Conclusions - Luxembourg European Council, 12-13 December 1997," http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/032a0008.htm (accessed January 29, 2007).

[50] European Council, "Presidency Conclusions – Cardiff European Council, 15 and 16 June 1998," http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/54315.pdf (accessed January 29, 2007).

venues to concretize its conditionality, such as its local missions and official visits to the candidate countries.

EU's conditionality is much more traditional than that of NATO in that it relies on rather well-defined pre-accession stipulations affecting both the economic and political landscapes of applicants, as evidenced in the 80,000 pages of the *acquis*. The applicants have only a very limited possibility to negotiate, with any gains in negotiations either being transitional in nature or requiring a concession in another area of negotiations. Nevertheless, a process of exchange and socialization also takes place, contributing to compliance on the part of the applicants.

Similarly to NATO, the EU used gradualism very successfully in its conditionality strategy to regulate the speed of the process and encourage the applicants to work hard to achieve compliance. The EU created the following stages in the accession process: (1) signing of the association agreements between the EU and the applicants (which concentrate on opening up trade); (2) submission of an application for membership by the applicant; (3) granting status of applicant for membership by the EU, screening and negotiations based on the chapters of the *acquis*, and final negotiations (concluded in December 2002); and (4) signing of the Accession Treaty (April 2003), ratification of the Treaty by all current and future members, and, finally, membership.

Power asymmetry remains in places through the entire accession process. There are no guarantees that once an application for membership is submitted, the EU will grant the status of applicant and will initiate negotiations. Turkey is clearly the most dramatic example of how important the milestones listed above are: Turkey applied for associate membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1959 and for full

membership in 1987, but the EU did not give the green light to start negotiations until 2005.

COMPLIANCE

Now that the specifics of NATO and EU conditionality have been discussed, it is necessary to examine the concept of compliance in greater detail, as compliance goes hand in hand with conditionality. While conditionality is imposed by the international institution, compliance encompasses the strategies on part of the nation state in response to conditionality. Compliance is then closely linked to conditionality, since only if the national government meets the criteria specified by the international institution can it obtain the benefits. Compliance is defined as "the extent to which agents act in accordance with and in fulfillment of the conditions prescribed by international institutions."[51] This dissertation views compliance as the domestic-level response to institutional conditionality. Moreover, in order to stress the importance of domestic variables, and particularly the role of domestic political leadership, in the process of compliance, this dissertation terms compliance "domestic conditionality."

Compliance and Theoretical Approaches

International relations theory offers two types of explanation for what motivates nation-states to comply with institutional pressure: systemic and subsystemic. This dissertation argues that the systemic explanation, as represented by neorealism and neoliberalism, has an immense power in determining the motivations of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to seek NATO and EU membership and thus take on the

[51] Checkel, "Compliance and Conditionality."

challenges and burdens of the conditionality of the two institutions. However, greater insight can be gained by taking subsystemic explanations into consideration. The discussion of the way interest-driven and norm-driven rhetoric and behavior on part of the leadership interacted in the process of the Czech and Slovak Republics' compliance with NATO and EU conditionality demonstrates not only the relevance of both systemic and subsystemic approaches but also the greater explanatory power of a combined approach.

Systemic Explanations of Compliance

Even though neorealism and neoliberalism differ in their understanding of many issues, such as international cooperation and the role of international institutions in tempering anarchy, it is important to point out that the two theories share basic assumptions about the organization of international relations.[52] Both theories use the system as their unit of analysis, with states assumed to display stable and similar domestic preferences, decision-making procedures, and methods for extracting resources out of the domestic setting. States are treated as rational actors that seek to maximize their gains and pursue their interests with survival as the primary goal. Finally, states exist in an anarchical world.

According to the systemic analysis, individual characteristics of the units are essentially irrelevant for analysis because it is the units' placement in the system and not

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[52] See, for example, James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View," in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons (London, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002), 2-72; and Robert Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate," in *Progress in International Relations Theory*, ed. Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: MIT Press, 2003), 277-309.

their internal qualities that determine their behavior.[53] As a result, neorealist and neoliberalist analysis ignores decision-making procedures on the domestic level, state responses to internal stimuli, and the role of the individual. Only characteristics of the system, namely anarchy, self-help, and balance of power and threat, are considered to have an effect on state behavior. In this view, the analysis of sub-systemic variables is considered reductionist.

Systemic arguments explaining compliance with NATO and EU conditionality have centered primarily on geopolitics and economics and the interests related to those two aspects.[54] While the applicants saw both NATO and the EU as a source of security and economic benefits, NATO was seen primarily as the means for achieving the geopolitical goals, while the EU was perceived as the provider of the economic benefits.

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe pursued NATO membership primarily in order to seek protection from resurgent Russia. Even though Russia was greatly weakened in the 1990s, the memory of the Soviet dominance loomed large across the territory it once controlled. Moreover, Russia continued to throw its weight around in its backyard, primarily the Baltics, and to quell discontent at home with force.

The wars in the Balkans and later Kosovo served as a further impetus to join the Alliance. The Yugoslav wars drove home the point that peace is not a condition that could be regarded as a given in post-Cold War Europe.[55] Finally, it also became apparent that there was no other viable security guarantor besides NATO in the European space.

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[53] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.
[54] See, for example, Moravcsik and Vachudova, "National Interest, State Power, and EU Enlargement;" and Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*.
[55] On the wars in the Balkans, see for example Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*, 3rd ed. (New York: Penguin, 1996); James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (London: Hurts & Co., 1997); and Joyce P. Kaufman, *NATO and the Former Yugoslavia: Crisis, Conflict, and the Atlantic Alliance* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, c2002).

Russia was perceived with mistrust, the OSCE was seen as too weak and disjointed in security matters, and the military arm of the EU was still too far away from being functional.

Furthermore, the former communist countries considered NATO membership as a means of gaining easier access to the United States, the only remaining superpower.[56] With the EU security policy being underdeveloped, NATO membership was viewed by the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as tying the United States – the only actor capable of providing security – to their security through the provisions of Article V of the Washington Treaty. It was also seen as a means to accomplish the modernization of the applicants' armed forces and as means to other ends, with NATO membership being perceived as a stepping stone to EU membership. The nations of Central and Eastern Europe soon realized that achieving EU membership would be an arduous and long-term task. NATO's conditionality, however, was not as strict and elaborate as that of the EU. The logic was that NATO membership would be perceived as a sign that the applicants had reached an important milestone in their transition to democracy and a market economy, which would help them move closer to EU membership.

EU membership was also perceived, for the most part, as a source of benefits. These benefits are mainly in the economic sphere, though they were very much affected by geopolitics. The end of the Cold War removed the obstacles to greater cooperation between the western and eastern parts of Europe. The poorer East was eager to benefit from their proximity to nations whose economic growth was immense compared to that of the post-communist economies. EU membership was seen as a means to modernization, foreign investment, and, ultimately increased competitiveness.

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[56] Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization," 976.

While access to the EU market was partially achieved without membership, much more was to be gained through membership. Membership promised benefits not only prior to but also following enlargement, in the form of full economic integration achieved through access to the EU market and increased incentives for foreign direct investment, as well as continued payments from the EU budget. Moreover, membership would mean a voice in the decision-making process of the organization. In short, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe pursued EU membership and were willing to comply with the conditions because they perceived that the benefits of membership outweighed the costs stemming from compliance.[57] Applicant states saw enlargement as "a matter of net national interest."[58] As the case study chapters will demonstrate, the leadership of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe had systemic factors very much in mind when considering the costs and benefits of NATO and EU membership.

Subsystemic Explanations of Compliance

The proponents of the systemic approach have attracted the criticism of other scholars who have argued systemic-level analysis does not provide a sufficiently full account of international outcomes and foreign policy decisions.[59] This trend has had an impact on the study of the relations between NATO and the EU on one side and states on the other side, with scholars examining the role of subsystemic variables in the

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[57] Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe*, 54.
[58] Moravcsik and Vachudova, "National Interest, State Power, and EU Enlargement," 3.
[59] See, for example, the neoclassical realist argument that advocates the inclusion of sub-systemic factors in Randall L. Schweller, "The Progressiveness of Neoclassical Realism," in *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field*, ed. Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), 311-347.

interactions between the two international institutions and the nation states and calling for "bringing the domestic back in."

As will be discussed in greater detail below, the subsystemic approach can be broadly divided into two strands – rationalist and constructivist – depending on whether actors' behavior is seen to be based upon the logic of consequentiality, characterized by cost-benefit calculation, or the logic of appropriateness, where behavior is guided by norms. Scholars belonging to both categories of subsystemic study have examined both the properties of the political system and actors on the domestic level and the characteristics of the interaction between the international institutions and the domestic-level actors. The following factors are examples of what has been studied in regard to conditionality and compliance: role of policy makers, the strength of domestic opposition, intensity of contact between the international institution and the domestic actors, style of discourse, national identity, societal actors, political parties and their constellations, and role of the opposition. As far as the processes are concerned, the effects of both cost-to benefit calculation and various means of socialization have been studied with respect to behavior. The results of these studies point to confluence of interests and norms in the process of compliance.

Compliance, just like conditionality, has been studied and interpreted from both the rationalist and the constructivist perspectives. Traditionally, compliance has been viewed from the perspective of the economic model of behavior where the agents, in this case national governments, respond to incentives according to their cost/benefit calculations. When the benefits prevail, the governments adjust their policies according to the conditions prescribed by the international institutions. The traditional

understanding of compliance then stresses the role of interest, such as monetary and material gains, and falls under the "*homo oeconomicus*" model. According to this model, actors are rational utility-maximizers who always calculate the potential costs and benefits of their behavior. They strive to achieve their goals while paying the minimum price, and so they select the option that is optimal relative to their preferences regarding outcomes and the constraints that they face. Under the *homo oeconomicus* model, the actor follows the "logic of consequentiality" where behavior is driven by rational choice, i.e. preferences and expected consequences of action.[60] The choices of the actors are exogenous, which means they are forced upon the actor by the anarchical character of the international system.

It has been argued that incentives and threats issued by the international institutions are sometime insufficient to achieve compliance.[61] Scholars and policy-makers have observed that social interaction between the international institutions and national governments can lead to socialization, knowledge and norm transfer, and learning.[62] Compliance then happens not solely as a result of coercion but also through learning at the national level, which falls under the "*homo sociologicus*" model.[63] Unlike the "*homo oeconomicus*" model, the "*homo sociologicus*" model claims ideas, values, and norms affect the behavior of actors. When faced with several options, *homo sociologicus* asks not about options, goals, consequences, and utility. Instead, the decision-making process is based on the "logic of appropriateness," which is rule-

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[60] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1989).
[61] Checkel, "Compliance and Conditionality."
[62] Thomas Christiansen, Knud Erik Jorgensen, and Antje Wiener, eds., *The Social Construction of Europe* (London: SAGE Publications, 2001); Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
[63] Volker Rittberger, ed. *German Foreign Policy since Unification: Theories and Case Studies* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), 106-107.

governed.[64] Unlike the actor who proceeds on the basis of the logic of consequentiality, the *homo sociologicus* actor evaluates a variety of options by asking questions about the nature of a situation, the social roles addressed by a situation, and the fit between a certain role and a behavioral option before selecting the most appropriate course of action.

It has been argued that compliance should be measured by the legislative outcome and its implementation rather than the actors' attitudes and willingness to comply, as attitudes and preferences are not easily measured.[65] Moreover, what appears to be a change in preferences might instead be a change in strategies. Thus, while statements and actions can serve as a good indication of preferences, it is simply not possible to take those for granted and disregard the possibility of instrumentalization.

Judith Kelley argues the following about the complexity of comparing the effects of various mechanisms:

> "...comparison of mechanisms is difficult because they often have different dependent variables. Whereas persuasion tends to focus on beliefs and identity, sanctions, conditionality, use of force, and even shaming mostly focus on behavior. Treating these outcomes as comparable would be methodologically flawed. Internalization and behavior change are not identical, and while they may influence each other they do not necessarily occur simultaneously or in a particular order...The challenge is thus how to perform a more comprehensive study that takes both processes into account yet retains consistency."[66]

This dissertation strives to do just that – be comprehensive and carefully trace the effects of interest-driven compliance on one hand and socialization and normative pressure on the other. It argues that it is necessary to study the actors' attitudes in order to

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[64] Henning Boekle, Volker Rittberger, and Wolfgang Wagner, "Constructivist Foreign Policy Theory," in *German Foreign Policy since Unification: Theories and Case Studies*, ed. Volker Rittberger (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), 107.
[65] Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*; Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe."
[66] Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 29.

better understand the link between conditionality and compliance. The case studies in the following chapters provide insights into the question of whether state responses were driven by conditionality or by normative pressure, and thus contribute to our understanding of the interplay of norms and interests.

LEADERSHIP AND INTEREST-NORM DYNAMICS

The tendency to strictly separate rationalist and normative arguments is outdated and often "a matter of degree rather than principle."[67] Both approaches are present on the domestic level, and they need to be examined together, as they can be seen as "partially competing and partially complementary sources of theoretical inspiration" for the study of conditionality and compliance.[68] As states consider and define their interests and position in the international system, socialization is taking place through contact with the international institutions. As socialization takes place, the way interests are being evaluated is increasingly being affected by norms. At the same time, interests are being reflected in norms.

This dissertation studies the role of leadership as one of the agents of interaction between the institutions and the state. In the context of institutional conditionality and domestic compliance, leaders serve as important conduits. They evaluate their own interests and how their interests can be served or hindered by complying with NATO and EU conditionality. Political leaders are then viewed as the key agents in the process of translating institutional conditionality into domestic compliance. As indicated in the Introduction, this dissertation understands leadership as those individuals who shape

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[67] Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, eds., *The Politics of European Union Enlargement*, 10.
[68] Ibid., 10.

policies on the domestic level, such as presidents, prime ministers, members of cabinets and parliaments, and party leaders. Leaders function as an intervening variable between conditionality and compliance because they are in the position to implement measures to achieve compliance or, on the other hand, to hinder the process. They are more inclined to follow through with compliance if it serves their interest. Moreover, as the case studies demonstrate, compliance is supported by the presence of a normative framework on the domestic level that is in line with the norms embodied in conditionality.

Furthermore, the opportunities of political leadership are "highly contextual."[69] This context, represented traditionally by aspects such as upbringing, education, and public opinion, influences the decision-making process of leaders. This dissertation views conditionality as yet another external stimulus to which leaders are forced to respond. The response, once again, does not occur in a vacuum but is affected by the degree to which leaders perceived compliance to be aligned with their interests and normative positions.

This dissertation claims that both the NATO and EU enlargements and the applicants' compliance with the enlargement conditions were primarily interest-driven. However, as the study of the Czech and the Slovak accession to NATO and the EU demonstrates, norms played a role in the process as well, making the argument more subtle than the traditional systemic and rationalist argument: In order to achieve compliance with conditionality, norms of behavior had to be satisfied. Norms cannot be ignored in the process. While interest was pursued, as there was no alternative to membership in the eyes of the applicants, the norm of reintegration within the democratic

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[69] Haughton, *Constraints and Opportunities of Leadership*, 10.

community was crucial. The post-communist countries saw NATO and EU membership as a basis for constructing a new identity rooted in democratic values and norms.

Table 1 summarizes the following hypotheses:

H1: If the interests and the norms of the leadership are aligned with conditionality, the likelihood of compliance is high.

H2: If the interests of the leadership are aligned with conditionality but the norms are not, the likelihood of compliance is moderate.

H3: If the interests of the leadership are not aligned with conditionality but the norms are, the likelihood of compliance is low.

H4: If neither the interests nor the norms of the leadership are aligned with conditionality, the likelihood of compliance is minimal.

Table 1: Hypotheses

Hypothesis	*Interest Alignment*	*Norm Alignment*	*Compliance with Conditionality*
H1	2	2	High
H2	2	0-1	Moderate
H3	0	1-2	Low
H4	0	0	Minimal

Note: 0 = minimal alignment; 1 = low alignment; 2 = high alignment[70]

Hypotheses H1 and H4 represent the opposite end of the spectrum of compliance with conditionality, with high norm and interest alignment resulting in high likelihood of compliance and minimal alignment leading to minimal compliance. Hypotheses H2 and H3 are similar in that they represent a varying degree of the mix of interests and norms, yet there is an important difference between the two. Hypothesis H2 stresses the role of high interest alignment over norm alignment, stemming from the nature of NATO and EU conditionality in terms of the magnitude of tasks it requires the domestic leadership to

[70] The scale of 0-2 used in Table 1 represents the subjective assessment of the level of alignment of interests and norms on the part of the leadership established by the author.

fulfill. As a result, H2 predicts moderate compliance. H3, in the other hand, predicts only low compliance due to the lack of interest alignment.

This dissertation looks at instances that show progressive socialization and/or an increasingly mature way in which interest is being used. It examines what the applicants were expecting and to what they were responding. Czechs started their journey to NATO and EU accession on the normative end of the spectrum, with Havel and other dissidents pulling the country through the process. Slovakia was more elite interest-driven at the beginning of the process. Once negotiations started, the Czech Republic became very much interest-driven. All along, the Czech Republic experienced a mix of normative leaders and interest advocates, as illustrated primarily by Havel and Klaus. Slovakia needed to experience the normative phase to initiate steps toward enlargement.

Chapters IV, V, and VI examine the process of compliance in greater detail, as represented by the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and the EU. The Czech Republic might be regarded as a relatively straightforward case of compliance, wherein the domestic conditionality, represented by the normative framework and interests, was to a large extent aligned with NATO and EU conditionality. The beliefs held by the Czech leadership did not have to change greatly to align with NATO and EU norms, and the cost-benefit calculations of the leaders were relatively easy to tip in the direction of policy change. In Slovakia, however, we can observe incongruence between the normative aspects of the Slovak leadership and their interests on one side and the conditionality of NATO and the EU on the other side, which explains Slovakia's less direct route to NATO and EU membership.

Chapter III lays the groundwork for the detailed discussion of the Czech and Slovak routes to NATO and EU membership, and the differences encountered along the way. It does so by surveying the history of the two nations in three periods: pre-Czechoslovakia, Czechoslovakia, and post-1993, when the common state disintegrated. The discussion demonstrates the many similarities in the economic, social, and cultural characteristics of the two nations. The chapter then turns to the issue of leadership and argues that the nature of the post-1989 Czech and Slovak leadership was influenced by the Czechoslovak history, namely the events during and after the Prague Spring of 1968.

The Czech and the Slovak leaders were treated very differently following the revolutionary days of 1968 and the ensuing Soviet invasion. Following the suppression of the Prague Spring, new leadership was installed in Czechoslovakia that was tasked by Moscow to purge the reformist elites. These purges took a different turn in the two republics: the Czech elites were persecuted in an uncompromising way, resulting in a large portion moving into dissent; the Slovak elite, which was perceived by Moscow as much less threatening than their Czech counterparts, was handled more leniently, with many of its members maintaining their positions and affiliation with the Communist party. Following the fall of the communist rule in Czechoslovakia in 1989, many émigrés and dissidents became part of the Czechoslovak government. However, the proportion of former communists remained larger in Slovakia, while in the Czech Republic, the communist elite was largely discredited.[71] In fact, it has been argued that Czechoslovakia disintegrated as a result of "the clash between the interests and world-views of these two

[71] Note concerning capitalization: Czech republic and Slovak republic refer to the two nations in the common state of Czechoslovakia. Following independence, the spelling is Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, with capital "R."

elites, who were shaped by radically incongruous experiences and trajectories."[72] This dissertation takes this conclusion one step further and argues that the Czech and Slovak leaderships' divergent ideological formation in the post-1968 and post-1989 periods, together with their attitudes toward communism, influenced their "predispositions" to "good" versus "bad" leadership, and determined the different paths of the Czech and Slovak NATO and EU accession processes.

[72] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, xxi.

CHAPTER III

THE CZECH-SLOVAK EXPERIENCE

This chapter serves as an introduction to the empirical analysis that follows in the next three chapters. Its aim is to set the stage for the discussion of NATO and EU membership conditionality and the way it was adopted in the Czech and the Slovak Republics during the accession process. Before venturing into this discussion and exploring the differences experienced by these two countries in the course of achieving compliance with NATO and EU rules and regulations, it will be helpful to review the history of these two nations that were once very closely tied together in a single state. The dominant theme of this chapter is that of Czech and Slovak nationalism and national consciousness and the role that the elites played in representing and advancing the idea of national preservation and aspirations for statehood.

In order to understand the relationship between the Czechs and the Slovaks, the development of the Czech and the Slovak leadership in the 20th century, and the two countries' attitudes toward statehood, NATO, and the EU, it is necessary to examine the two countries from a historical perspective. Developed over centuries, this relationship has been characterized by both the romantic notion of Slavic affinity and solidarity and pragmatic concerns for national survival. Both the Czechs and the Slovaks were dominated by large empires, and they supported each other in their struggle for nationhood. The Czechs saw the Slovaks as their protection against the "Germanic encirclement;" the Slovaks welcomed the Czechs as their ally in the struggle against the

Hungarian assimilation.[1] This historical closeness is further reflected in the similarity of the two languages—Czech and Slovak—which has allowed the two nations to communicate and influence each other throughout their history. This historical affinity and mutual support led the two nations to create a common state in October 1918 following the dissolution of the Austrian-Hungarian kingdom at the end of World War I.

At the same time, there have always been pronounced differences between the two peoples arising from their different historical experiences, both when existing as separate entities and when living together in one state. Most importantly, while the Czechs experienced nationhood and statehood long before Czechoslovakia was founded, the Slovak nationalistic impulses and aspirations to statehood were, until 1993, thwarted and unfulfilled, leading to frustrated nationalism. These frustrations would continue while living in the common state of Czechoslovakia and would periodically resurface with varying degrees of urgency, with the most dramatic manifestation being, of course, the events leading to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

This chapter is organized around three distinct periods of the two countries' history—pre-Czechoslovakia (until 1918), Czechoslovakia (1918–1993), and independence (1993–present). It concentrates on the evolution of the Czech and Slovak national consciousness, and it pays special attention to events that had a significant impact on the nature of the political leadership—primarily the Prague Spring of 1968—and, in turn, to the events whose courses were determined by the Czech and Slovak leaders, namely the dissolution of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (ČSFR) in

[1] Ján Mlynárik, "História česko-slovenských vzťahov" [The History of Czech-Slovak Relations], in *Rozloučení s Československem: Příčiny a důsledky česko-slovenského rozchodu* [Farewell to Czechoslovakia: Causes and Consequences of the Czech-Slovak Breakup], ed. Rüdiger Kipke and Karel Vodička (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1993), 17.

1993. This chapter also discusses the similarities and differences between these two nations in the socio-economic sphere, as economic performance has also proved to be a factor in shaping decisions and policies. The goal is to show how various events and experiences influenced the Czech and the Slovak leaders, shaping their attitudes toward statehood, geopolitics, and normative grounding as well as the EU and NATO.

The first section of this chapter summarizes the divergent Czech and Slovak experiences with statehood in the pre-Czechoslovakia era. This part of the history is relevant to an understanding of the Czech and Slovak attitudes toward the concept of a nation and of statehood, as it continues to influence the Czech and Slovak leaders' perceptions. As this section demonstrates, both the Czechs and the Slovaks were ruled by others, namely the Habsburgs in the Czech Lands (in the period 1526-World War I) and the Hungarians in Slovakia. However, the Czechs had also experienced centuries of nationhood and the creation of a Czech identity prior to Czechoslovakia being founded. The Slovak people, on the other hand, were a part of the Hungarian monarchy from the tenth century until the end of World War I, when Czechoslovakia was founded, and during that time they had no experience of statehood.

The second section discusses the common state, which lasted from October 28, 1918 until December 31, 1992, with a brief interruption during World War II where Slovakia existed as a pseudo-independent state under German tutelage. As this section demonstrates, the Czech and the Slovak parts of the single country underwent gradual equalization as measured by socioeconomic factors, with Slovakia catching up on its historically more industrialized sister-nation as a result of targeted industrialization and subsidies. This section also highlights the fact that, despite this socioeconomic

equalization, the Czechs and the Slovaks were not completely equal in terms of political institutions. Finally, the events of the Prague Spring are reviewed here in order to set the stage for the discussion of the differences in the development of the post-1989 Czech and Slovak leadership.

The third part of this chapter examines the post-Communist years, which include the period up to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the post-1993 years of independence. Similarly to the previous section, it focuses on the events and issues that influenced the Czech and Slovak leaders following the fall of Communism, the leaders' role in the breakup of the country, and their performance since independence from the perspective of democratization and the restructuring of the economy. This section also serves as a bridge to the detailed case studies of the Czech and the Slovak leaders and their interactions with NATO and EU conditionality in Chapters IV, V, and VI.

The last section of this chapter provides an overview of the evolution of the Czechoslovak foreign and security policy and the debates about the possibility and desirability of NATO and EU membership. It also contains an overview of the alternatives to EU and NATO membership that were discussed by the Czech and Slovak leaders in the early 1990s and explains why these alternatives were soon found to be sub-optimal. Finally, it examines the early debates on enlargement within NATO and EU in an effort to explain the background of NATO and EU conditionality and the long and complex process of enlargement of the two institutions.

PRE-CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Prior to the formation of the modern Czechoslovak state in 1918, the Czechs and the Slovaks went through a cycle whereby periods of close contact and cooperation would be followed by mutual isolation. First, the ancestors of the Czechs and the Slovaks lived together within the Great Moravian Empire between 833 and 907. The Empire laid the foundations for the idea of a common statehood, as well as the idea of self-rule for these two Slavic nations. This stage of rudimentary integration was replaced by a long period of disintegration of Czech-Slovak relations, beginning in the 10th century following the defeat of the Great Moravian Empire by Magyar invaders and its partition among the Hungarian, Bohemian, and Polish Kingdoms and the Holy Roman Empire. While the Czech Lands, together with Moravia, became a part of the medieval Czech state—the Bohemian Kingdom— the Slovak territory was gradually integrated into the Hungarian Kingdom between the 11th and 14th centuries.

The Czech and the Slovak tribes developed separately after the fall of the Great Moravian Empire, and this would influence Czech-Slovak relations in the future. The formation of the Czech state under the Bohemian Kingdom enabled the growth of the Czech nationality and the spread of the Czech language.[2] By contrast, the process of the formation of the Slovak nationality advanced very slowly. Slovak tribes did not have decision-making power in the Kingdom of Hungary, and they were either assimilated into the Hungarian culture or were pushed to the margins of the Hungarian society. "Magyarization" of the nobility from non-Hungarian ethnic groups was a rule in upward

[2] The Bohemian Kingdom is often cited by Czechs as one of the pivotal periods of their history. More specifically, the reign of Charles IV in the years 1346-1378 is often referred to as the "Golden Age" of the Czech history when Prague became a center of the Holy Roman Empire. It was also in the 14th century that the Czech language started developing norms of a literary language on high cultural and communication levels.

social movement, which is why a Slovak elite was not formed.[3] Moreover, the Hungarian state opposed the creation of a Slovak nationality and an official Slovak language. Nevertheless, the Slovaks managed to maintain their identity, which was significantly supported and influenced by the Czechs. The period between the 14th and the 16th centuries was characterized by the spread of the Czech language in Slovakia's schools, public offices, and economic life.

The accession of the Habsburg dynasty to the Bohemian and Hungarian thrones in the 16th century represented another phase of common Czech-Slovak history. The Habsburg rule implemented centralization in an effort to control the many nationalities within the empire. However, centralization led to resentment on the part of the minorities and fuelled their cohesion, inspired by the goal of preserving their respective cultures and languages. Centralization then contributed to the process of the strengthening and growth of the individual nationalities. The Slovaks gradually stopped using Czech and began the process of "slovakization," leading to the formation of a literary Slovak language and efforts to codify it.

The period of the 18th century until mid-19th century is characterized by the struggle for Czech and Slovak nationhood within their respective territories. The Czechs fought the German oppression; the Slovaks strove to foster a sense of national identity among the Slovak people. This new shared quality in the Czech-Slovak relations enhanced the notion of ethnic affinity and Czech-Slovak solidarity, enriched the mix of

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[3] Karl Peter Schwarz, *Česi a Slováci: Dlhá cesta k mierovému rozchodu* [The Czech and the Slovaks: The Long Journey to a Peaceful Breakup], trans. Karl Gronsky (Bratislava: Odkaz, 1994), 47.

ethnic, historic, and economic connections, and became an "ideational and political tool in the struggle for societal and national emancipation of both ethnic groups."[4]

During World War I, the representatives of the two nations worked very closely together in the resistance in exile. Their goal was to form a common Czech-Slovak state that would ensure the survival of the two nations, independent from German and Hungarian rule. The key representatives of the formation of Czechoslovakia were the Czech Tomáš G. Masaryk and the Slovak Milan Rastislav Štefánik, who was Masaryk's closest collaborator.[5] Masaryk presented the idea of a common Czech-Slovak state to the Allied leaders, who approved the demand in the summer of 1918. The formation of an independent Czechoslovak state was proclaimed upon the disintegration of Austria-Hungary on October 28, 1918. Two days later, on October 30, the Slovak political representation issued the "Martin Declaration," proclaiming the Slovak allegiance to the new state. Thus, Czech-Slovak relations developed from one of mutual support in their efforts to preserve their respective national identities to formal union in a common state.

It is important to point out for the discussion that follows that Slovak representatives demanded Slovak autonomy during the negotiations in exile, in the Pittsburg agreement of May 30, 1918. The document, signed by Czech, Slovak, and Rusyn leaders in exile in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, confirmed their desire to create a unified Czechoslovak state but also contained provisions for Slovak autonomy. [6]

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[4] Mlynárik, "História česko-slovenských vzťahov" [The History of Czech-Slovak Relations], 22.
[5] Ľubomír Lipták, "History of Slovakia," Embassy of the Slovak Republic in the United States, http://www.slovakembassy-us.org/history.html (accessed November 1, 2007).
[6] The Rusyns, also knows as the Ruthenians, lived primarily in a province called Subcarpathian Ruthenia (also referred to as Subcarpathian Russia), which was part of the Czechoslovak territory between 1919 and 1939. The Rusyns represented 3.5 percent of Czechoslovakia's population. The territory was occupied by Hungary during World War II, and it was incorporated into the Soviet Union as part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in September 1945. See Jaroslav Krejčí and Pavel Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92: A Laboratory for Social Change* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), esp. 11 and 37-40.

However, the Czechoslovak constitutions, adopted in 1920, had no such provisions. This would eventually lead to mounting and more assertive Slovak calls for autonomy in the 1920s and 1930s.[7]

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

First Republic

The independent state of Czechoslovakia was a "marriage out of reason," as the union gave both nations better chances of survival *vis-à-vis* their former oppressors.[8] According to Ľubomír Lipták, the idea of a single state for the Czechs and the Slovaks had "a rational basis." The Czechs viewed it as a means to "diminish the German hold upon the Czech Lands and open the way for it to the east and south-east." In the Slovak eyes, a union with the Czechs "would end forced magyarization and a non-democratic regime so that the development of their culture and national emancipation would become easier and come about more quickly."[9] However, as became apparent in 1938-39, the "demographic advantage" gained by combining the populations of the two nations did not prove sufficient to keep Hitler from partitioning Czechoslovakia.[10]

The Czechs were the senior partner in the new state, led by President Tomáš G. Masaryk and his Foreign Minister Eduard Beneš. The Slovaks viewed with dissatisfaction the fact that the unitary state structure prevented them from having the status of a separate nation in the common state. They resented the more powerful and economically-developed Czechs and the concentration of political power in Prague.

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[7] Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, 5-7.
[8] Robert Young, *The Breakup of Czechoslovakia* (Kingston, Ont.: Queen's University, 1994), 7.
[9] Lipták, "History of Slovakia."
[10] Krejčí and Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92*, 26.

Moreover, the Slovaks did not accept the idea of a Czechoslovak identity: "The unitary Czechoslovak state was based on the erroneous assumption that the Slovaks were essentially the same people as the Czechs but happened to speak a different dialect evolved under the centuries of separate Hungarian rule."[11] This fallacious notion, combined with Prague's status as the center of state power and the economic crisis of the 1930s that affected the weaker Slovak economy more negatively than the more industrialized and diversified Czech economy,[12] led to the rise of Slovak nationalist resentment in the 1930s.

The Slovak nationalist movement was led by Andrej Hlinka, priest and leader of the Slovak People's Party. After Hlinka's death, Jozef Tiso became the new leader of the Slovak nationalist movement. Following the 1938 Munich agreement between the Great Powers and Hitler, Czechoslovakia was dismembered and a Slovak state was established, under the control of Nazi Germany. The Slovaks saw the fall of Czechoslovakia "as an opportunity rather than a disaster."[13] In other words, the Slovak nationalists perceived the partitioning of the common state as their chance to build a Slovak state independent from the Czechs and controlled by the Slovak leadership.

World War II and the Second and Third Republics

The Czechs and the Slovaks had different World War II experiences. Following the Munich ultimatum of September 29, 1938, Czechoslovakia was partitioned, with parts going to Germany, Hungary, and Poland. Moreover, the remnants of Czechoslovakia were split into Czecho-Slovakia, with Slovakia becoming a "separate self-governing"

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[11] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Profile: Czech Republic and Slovakia, 1996-97," (1996): 34.
[12] Ibid., 3.
[13] Krejčí and Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92*, 26.

nation, and Ruthenia, the easternmost part of the country, obtaining a similar status.[14] However, Hitler's pressure did not stop there. Hitler used the Slovak calls for autonomy to his advantage. On March 13, 1939 in Berlin, he announced to Jozef Tiso, who had been meanwhile deposed by Prague from his position of Prime Minister for his advocacy of Slovak separatism, that if Slovakia did not create an independent state, Germany would withdraw its protection. What that meant was that Slovakia would have been attacked by Hungary.[15] A day later, the Slovak National Council announced the creation of an independent Slovak state under the protection of Germany. Slovakia became a pseudo-independent state controlled by Nazi Germany. This fact, combined with the Nazi occupation of the Czech Lands that began on the night of March 14–15, 1939, caused a temporary dissolution of the Czechoslovak state. Slovakia's independence during World War II was one in name only. Moreover, it was more of "a gift of circumstance, a premature bonus which gradually became devaluated in the course of further events."[16] These further events were the coming to power of Fascist and Nazi elements in the Slovak government under Tiso and Slovakia's anti-Jewish policies between 1941–42.

Following the end of World War II and the restoration of the Czechoslovak state, the Slovaks were recognized as a distinct nation within the country, but asymmetry in governance persisted, with Slovaks having only limited self-rule. The asymmetry continued after the communists took power in 1948. While a certain level of devolution occurred based on the 1948 constitution adopted by the communist regime, with the Slovak National Council and the Board of Commissioners being granted more power, no

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[14] Ibid., 19.
[15] Ibid., 26.
[16] Ibid., 26.

such institutions existed in the Czech Lands. They were created to satisfy the Slovaks, but in reality, they did not enhance their standing in the common state.

Communist Czechoslovakia, the Prague Spring, and "Normalization"

During communism, the unresolved tensions regarding the unequal status of the Czechs and the Slovaks were subordinated to the functioning of the communist regime. Czech-Slovak relations entered a period of crisis that lasted until 1968 and the accession of Alexander Dubček, leader of the Slovak Communist Party, to power in January 1968. During the Prague Spring of 1968, Dubček led the efforts to transform Czechoslovakia. He introduced the policy of "communism with a human face", which aimed to rebuild the economy through a reduction of centralized management and state bureaucracy and through the establishment of political plurality and freedom of speech and press.[17] At the same time, he repeatedly assured Moscow that the reforms would not undermine the communist nature of the country and the role of the Soviet Union as the main ally of Czechoslovakia.[18]

Nonetheless, the democratization process soon started to alarm both Moscow and the anti-reformist Czech and Slovak communists. In the end, fears of democratic reforms spreading across Eastern Europe[19] led to the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw pact troops on the night of August 20–21.[20] The invasion ended on August 31 when the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia accepted the Soviet diktat. Dubček resigned under

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[17] Maria Dowling, *Czechoslovakia* (London: Arnold, 2002), 107.
[18] Peter G. Boyle, *American-Soviet Relations: From the Russian Revolution to the Fall of Communism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 159. See also Karen Dawisha, *The Kremlin and the Prague Spring* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984), 17.
[19] Boyle, *American-Soviet Relations*, 160.
[20] Harvey Starr, "A Collective Goods Analysis of the Warsaw Pact after Czechoslovakia," *International Organization* 28, no. 3 (Summer 1974): 521.

pressure on April 17, 1969, and his successor, Gustáv Husák, began the era of "normalization," under the close watch of the Soviet Union.[21]

"Normalization"

Normalization, which designates the period between 1969 and approximately 1987, entailed the restoration of firm rule of the Communist Party and the affirmation of Czechoslovakia's commitment to socialism. It also led to further distancing of the Czechs and the Slovaks as a result of divergent perceptions of the communist rule after the Prague Spring. The first two years of normalization (1969-1971) were marked by repression of anti-communist elements and their removal from official posts. About 500,000 out of a total of 1.65 million members were expelled from the party or left it voluntarily.[22] While the Czech anti-communist leadership was heavily repressed, the Slovak "men of '68," i.e. the reform communists, were dealt with in a significantly more lenient manner.[23] Moreover, several high-level appointments of Slovaks who had supported the Soviet invasion and participated in the normalization process made the Czechs distrustful of the Slovak political representation. Finally, the Slovaks had a more positive view of the communist era, as they benefited from it economically, with, Slovakia advancing economically as a result of significant subsidies. Moreover, Slovaks were encouraged to be active members of both the national and federal bureaucracies.

The year 1968 was crucial for the formation of the Czech and Slovak elites at that time as well as for the post-1989 leadership. It has been argued, for example, that the

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[21] For a detailed description of the events of the Prague Spring and the invasion, see Philip Windsor and Adam Roberts, *Czechoslovakia, 1968: Reform, Repression, and Resistance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).
[22] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Profile: Czech Republic and Slovakia, 1996-97," 4.
[23] Mlynárik, "História česko-slovenských vzťahov" [The History of Czech-Slovak Relations], 17-32.

differences in the experiences of the Czech and the Slovak elites in 1968 contributed to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993. Gil Eyal examines why the Czech and Slovak political elites came to view separation of the federation as the ideal answer to the problem of a political arrangement that would serve the respective interests of the two peoples in his book, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*. His explanation centers on the formation of a "bipolar elite constellation,...endowed... with distinctive political rationalities, within which the dissolution of the common state became a reasonable solution."[24] These "distinctive political rationalities" of the Czech and Slovak post-communist elites are rooted in the aftermath of the Prague Spring of 1968.

Following the Soviet-led invasion of the Warsaw Pact troops, new leadership was installed in Czechoslovakia that had to fulfill the task of purging the reformist elites, as directed by Moscow. The character of the purge of the Czech elite was significantly different than that of the purge of the Slovak elite. The Czech elites were considered the main instigators of the Prague Spring and were deemed dangerous to the communist regime. They were, therefore, persecuted in an uncompromising way. A large portion of the Czech elite moved into dissent. The Slovak elite, on the other hand, was largely unaffected by the purges, and its members chose the path of collaboration with the communist regime.

The difference in the treatment of the Czech and Slovak elites has been aptly summarized by Jozef Lenárt, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1968–1970 and First Secretary of the Slovak Communist Party in 1970–1987. According to Lenárt, the Slovak communist leadership "was much more genuinely Marxist-Leninist than the Czech leadership, and ... the Slovak intelligentsia

[24] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, xx.

was not disposed to counterrevolution as Czech intellectuals were."[25] Moreover, the Slovaks were generally satisfied with the rate of Slovak economic development and with the greater say that they had in the federation as a result of the 1969 constitution. The Slovak influence in the Czechoslovak government grew significantly in the 1970s and 1980s.[26]

Purges and the Post-Normalization Elites

There is statistical evidence to support the claim that the normalization purges and the downward mobility linked to it affected a larger portion of the Czech intelligentsia than the Slovak intelligentsia. About 24% of the Czech members of the Communist Party left the party between 1968–71. The corresponding number in Slovakia is about 12.5%. The ratio of expelled members was five Czechs to every Slovak.[27] As for the loss of jobs after 1968, the ratio was about 3.5 Czechs to each Slovak.[28]

Following the purges, a new class of elites was formed in Czechoslovakia. The segments of this class responded in various ways, including dissent,[29] collaboration, reform communism, and "internal exile," i.e. individuals who did not join the dissent or the opposition but who left the bureaucracy. The dissidents were primarily humanist scholars, such as philosophers, journalists, and jurists. Several artists and priests also belonged to the group. In most cases, they lost their jobs as a result of the purges and were prevented from working in their respective fields. They were not in a position of

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[25] Ibid., 47.
[26] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Profile: Czech Republic and Slovakia, 1996-97," 35.
[27] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 48.
[28] Ibid., 49.
[29] According to Czech philosopher and dissident Ladislav Hejdánek, dissidents were like human rights activists whose aim was to criticize the communist regime and the ideology. See Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 66-67.

power, and they therefore practiced "anti-politics." The dissidents' goal was not to challenge the communist leadership but to bring to people's attention the actions of the regime and to encourage independence of mind.[30] The "Charter 77"[31] movement, which was critical of the communist government's human rights violations and the whole process of normalization, and "A Few Sentences,"[32] a petition against the government issued in June 1989 and signed by ten thousand Czechs and Slovaks, are the primary examples of the types of activities the dissidents organized. Many dissidents were jailed for such efforts. Václav Havel was the leading dissident.

The technocrats who came to power after 1989 had worked at the state bank or at the various institutes of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (ČSAV). For the most part, they were not able to rise through the ranks and secure high-level positions because of their activities during and after 1968, namely, their praise of the western economic models and their resistance to joining the Communist Party. The technocrats were not dissidents. At the same time, they refused to be co-opted by the regime, and, as a result, they were demoted. They were not reform communists; they were a part of the "internal exile," i.e. they "...opted to be outside of politics, but their retreat was essentially a

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[30] Ibid., 147.

[31] The "Charter 77" manifesto Charter 77 was a petition drawn up by several Czechoslovak writers and intellectuals. It was published in January 1977. It demanded that the Communist government of Czechoslovakia recognize basic human rights as specified in the Helsinki Accords, of which the Czechoslovak government was a signatory. The manifesto was originally signed by 242 individuals, and the number of signatures gradually reached almost 1,900. Most signatories were Czech; only several dozens Slovaks signed the document. See "Charta 77" [Charter 77], Totality, http://www.totalita.cz/vysvetlivky/ch77.php (accessed October 5, 2007).

[32] "Petice Několik vět (text)" [A Few Sentences Petition (Text)], Totality, http://www.totalita.cz/texty/nvett.php (accessed October 5, 2007). The Petition demanded, among other things, the freeing of political prisoners, freedom of expression for the media, and public discussion regarding history, (namely the events of 1968), politics, and activities of the government.

conservative one, into the private sphere."[33] The technocrats from the ČSAV, and chiefly Václav Klaus, became the economic experts in the post-1989 Czechoslovak government.

The post-communist Slovak elite came primarily from three sources—research institutes, which served as safe havens for reform communists; management of large state-owned companies; and nationalist historians. All these groups were co-opted by the communist regime, possessed political capital, and stressed the idea of Slovak identity. The group of Slovak dissidents was a minority in comparison to those members of the elite co-opted by the communist regime. It was also much smaller than that in the Czech part of the country, and its members tended to belong to the Slovak Catholic opposition. In many cases, unlike the Czech dissidents, they were allowed to obtain higher education and pursue careers in their respective fields of expertise. For example, Ján Čarnogurský, one of the founding members of the Christian-Democratic Movement and Slovak Prime Minister in 1991–92, worked as a corporate lawyer during the communist era.

The reform communists became prominent members of the Slovak political leadership in the aftermath of the 1989 change of the regime. Milan Čič, the first post-communist Slovak Prime Minister, occupied high posts in the administration before and after the Prague Spring of 1968.[34] Unlike his counterpart on the Czech side, František Pitra, who was forced to leave politics because of his communist past, Čič continued his political career, first as a parliamentarian and then as president of the Slovak constitutional court.[35] Čič was replaced by another reform communist, Vladimír Mečiar, following the June 1990 elections. After a promising start as a local leader of the Slovak

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[33] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 80.
[34] Čič served as legal advisor to the Slovak National Assembly between 1964 and 1969, when he became deputy Slovak justice minister. He was fired from this post in 1970, only to be reinstated into high positions. He served as federal justice minister two years prior to the fall of communism.
[35] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 94.

Union of Youth, Mečiar was ousted from the Communist Party for his support of political reform. Unlike the Czech dissidents in the same situation, he was allowed to pursue higher education, eventually becoming a corporate lawyer. All along, he maintained close connections to prominent reform communists, such as Alexander Dubček and Čič, resulting in Mečiar's appointment as interior minister by Čič in the first post-communist government.

Economic Equalization during Communism

Before moving into the next section, it is necessary to address an issue that has appeared several times in the discussion above—the uneven economic development of the Czech and the Slovak lands at the outset of the common state and the gradual equalization during communism. The differences between the two nations were significant when Czechoslovakia was founded. Whereas the Czech Lands were, during the modern era prior to the founding of the common state in 1918, highly industrialized, the economy of the territory constituting present-day Slovakia was historically an agrarian-based one, with little industry, and both of these conditions still prevailed at the founding of the common state. It was the communists who invested heavily in Slovakia, leading to rapid industrialization. The rate of Slovak economic development increased so dramatically that some have regarded the phenomenon as the most substantial achievement of the Czechoslovak communist regime.[36]

During the First Republic of 1918–1938, Slovakia benefited from the Czech industrial expertise, with many Czech specialists serving in Slovakia. The overall economic benefits for Slovakia were, however, not very significant until the 1930s, when

[36] Krejčí and Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92*, 100.

an armament industry was built in Slovakia. The real leveling up did not occur until after the communists took power in 1948. The communists had a theory according to which "it was not so much Slovakia's political status but the economic equalization of Slovakia with the Czech Lands" that mattered to the Slovaks and that this economic equalization would push ethnic tensions to the background.[37] Slovakia became a recipient of significant subsidies from the federal budget for the building of heavy and defense industries.[38]

The communist policy worked. The Slovak labor force became more skilled and industrialized, and the percentage of wage earners in the labor force grew as well. To illustrate, in 1948, the level of industrialization in Slovakia was 54.5% of the level of industrialization in the Czech Lands; by 1989, Slovak industrialization grew to 92.6%. Similarly, the patient-doctor ratio in Slovakia grew from 76% of the Czech level in 1948 to 93.8% in 1989.[39] Moreover, the structure of the economy also underwent significant changes, with Slovakia gradually becoming more industrialized and less agrarian by the end of the 1980s. In 1948, 34.7% of the Czech economically-active population worked in the agricultural sector, 44.0% in the industrial sector, and 21.3% in the service sector. In Slovakia, the rate was 62.2% in agriculture, a mere 25.2% in industry, and 12.6% in services. The 1992 statistics showed much more similar values for the two parts of the country. The sector of agriculture accounted for 9.6% of Czechs and 12.1% of Slovaks;

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[37] Ibid., 101.
[38] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Profile: Czech Republic and Slovakia, 1996-97," 35.
[39] Krejčí and Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92*, 102.

industry employed 49.1% of Czechs and 44.0% of Slovaks; and services constituted 42.3% of the Czech and 43.9% of the Slovak workforce.[40]

The equalization in economic development was also matched by equalization in education. The levels of education were marked by systematic growth during the socialist era among both men and women, with the Slovak population matching and, in some instances, such as the category of women with secondary professional and tertiary education, surpassing the educational levels of the Czechs.[41]

It is important to point out that the development of the heavy and armaments industries was dependent on exports to the Soviet Union. Once the Cold War ended, the armaments industry became a burden and a source of unemployment in Slovakia. Moreover, the equalization policies also turned out to be, at least in the eyes of the Czechs, a political failure, since the growing levels of development in Slovakia led to renewed Slovak demands for equality in the governance of the country.

POST- COMMUNIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The end of communism precipitated the end of common statehood for the Czechs and the Slovaks. The question of statehood had not been dealt with properly since the 1918 inception of the Czechoslovak state.[42] The state was built around the ideological construct of a "Czechoslovak nation," which was contrary to the historical Czech-Slovak dualism, a dualism marked by political, economic, and cultural differences. These

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[40] Detailed information on the changes in the structure of the economy in the Czech Lands and Slovakia from 1921 until 1993 can be found in Krejčí and Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92*, 118-122.
[41] Ibid., 123-124.
[42] Rüdiger Kipke and Karel Vodička, eds., *Rozloučení s Československem: Příčiny a důsledky česko-slovenského rozchodu* [Farewell to Czechoslovakia: Causes and Consequences of the Czech-Slovak Breakup] (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1993), 11.

differences were neither respected nor successfully overcome during the existence of the common state. For these reasons, the idea of a united Czechoslovak nation never materialized, and the political will was lacking in the early 1990s to ensure the continuation of the common state.

Important events were experienced and perceived by the Czechs and the Slovaks in different ways, which contributed to the Czech attitude of taking the Slovak willingness to follow centralized policies for granted and to the Slovak resentment of these policies and their growing nationalist tendencies. To illustrate, the First Republic of 1918–1938 is considered the period of "golden times" by the Czechs, and President Masaryk is celebrated as the most important figure in modern Czech history. The Slovaks, on the other hand, have been critical of Masaryk and believed that his achievements benefited primarily the Czechs. Similarly, the Czechs and the Slovaks disagree in their views on the period of 1939–1945, as World War II affected the two parts of the country differently. The Czechs have been critical of the Slovak pro-Nazi state. Slovaks do not have a unified view on this issue; most Slovaks do not approve of their state's collaboration with the Nazi regime, but they also view it somewhat positively, as an attempt to achieve the status of an independent nation.[43] Post-World War II developments are also judged differently by the two nations. For instance, the execution of the main Slovak Nazi collaborator, Jozef Tiso, in 1947 was viewed by many Slovaks as Czech revenge, while the Czechs tend to perceive it as the appropriate response to Tiso's actions. Moreover, the Slovaks viewed the Czechs as having forced

[43] Petr Příhoda, "Sociálně-psychologické aspekty soužití Čechů a Slováků" [Social-Psychological Aspects of the Coexistence of the Czechs and the Slovaks], in *Rozloučení s Československem: Příčiny a důsledky česko-slovenského rozchodu* [Farewell to Czechoslovakia: Causes and Consequences of the Czech-Slovak Breakup], ed. Rüdiger Kipke and Karel Vodička (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1993), 37.

communism upon them, as in the 1946 elections, nationalist parties and not socialist or communist parties won in Slovakia. Therefore, the Slovaks viewed the communist centralization as Czech centralism. In 1968, during the course of the Prague Spring, while the Czechs called for democratization, the Slovaks demanded federalization first and democratization second.

The "involuntary adaptive symbiosis" with the communist regime was one of the few shared aspects of the Czech and Slovak common existence, but the Czechs and the Slovaks rejected it for different reasons following the end of communism in 1989.[44] The Slovak population assumed a much more positive stance toward the communist past than the Czech population. This was a reflection of two factors: the benefits of the modernization process that took place in Slovakia under socialism and the greater amount of uncertainty for the country once the communist regime fell. Slovakia experienced great economic gains during the socialist era. Moreover, the process of normalization that followed the Prague Spring was much more lenient with the Slovaks than the Czechs.

Soon after the fall of communism, it became clear that nationalism was on the rise and that the Czechs and the Slovaks had divergent views of their relations within the common state. Problems started in March 1990 with the so-called "hyphen war," when President Havel's proposal to remove the word "socialist" from the name Czechoslovak Socialist Republic resulted in a bitter Czech-Slovak row. The Slovaks demanded the creation of two words separated by a hyphen, which would express Slovak sovereignty and the federal character of the state. However, the Czechs identified themselves very strongly with the Czechoslovak state, and they refused to split the word with a hyphen. The hyphen debate provoked the first conflict between the Czechs and the Slovaks since

[44] Ibid., 38.

the fall of the communist government. It made it clear that the Czechs and the Slovaks had different notions of statehood and nationhood.[45]

The period of fundamental social, political, and economic transformation in the aftermath of the November 1989 "Velvet Revolution," i.e., the peaceful end of communism in Czechoslovakia, heightened the problems inherited from the communist era. Specifically, the economic reforms had a larger negative impact on Slovakia than the Czech Lands, and the polarization of the political scene grew steadily. The Czechs and the Slovaks did not understand democracy fully, due to their lack of experience with it. They did not realize that tensions are inherent to democracy. A growing number of the elites exploited these tensions in order to steer the Czech-Slovak discussion of statehood in the direction of a final solution to the issue of the nature and form of the political relationship that should exist between the Czechs and the Slovaks, which that had been suppressed under communism.

The 1992 election was the key to the future development of the common state: both nations gave their votes to political leaders who were clear in their intentions to either continue or slow down the economic transformation, an issue that was linked directly to the question of the continuation of Czechoslovakia. While the Czech leadership advocated speedy implementation of economic reforms in order to transform the economy from the socialist model to market economy, the majority of the Slovak leaders demanded a slow transition in en effort to avoid an economic upheaval. The common state disintegrated following an agreement between two individuals — Václav

[45] Karol Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled aneb Mírové děleni Československa* [For the Second and the Last Time or The Peaceful Split of Czechoslovakia] (Prague: G plus G, 1998), 15-16.

Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar — who represented the two opposing tendencies of the economic transition. This agreement was then ratified by the federal parliament.

The Velvet Revolution

The communist regime fell unexpectedly and peacefully. The Velvet Revolution started with student demonstrations in Prague on November 17, 1989 and soon led to the dismissal of the communist government and its replacement with a group composed chiefly of the members of the Czech dissent (which was a significantly larger group than the Slovak dissent group), as well as technocrats.[46]

Two major opposition groups emerged in November 1989: the Civic Forum (OF) in the Czech Lands, led by the charismatic dissident playwright Václav Havel, and the Slovak Public Against Violence (VPN). The movement forced the communist leadership to resign. After the communist authorities realized that they had lost control over the situation, they agreed to negotiate with the opposition, which led to the formation of a new government, the "Government of National Understanding," on December 10, 1989. Non-communists had a majority in this government, and many former dissidents were appointed to positions. Finally, on December 29, 1989, Havel became president.

The difference in the treatment of the Czech and the Slovak elites in 1968 determined the makeup of the post-1989 elites. The post-communist elite in the Czech Republic arose from the group of post-1968 dissidents and from the group of economists who had been in internal exile in the post-1968 period. Whereas in the Czech Republic the communist elite was almost entirely replaced by the former dissidents, émigrés, and

[46] Mlynárik, "História česko-slovenských vzťahov" [The History of Czech-Slovak Relations], 17-32.

technocrats after 1989, in Slovakia a significant number of former communists remained part of the elite, as there was a lack of alternatives:

> As a result, the elites who came to power after the fall of communism were fundamentally different: in the Czech lands, a complete turnover of elites again took place, because the Czech communist elite was thoroughly discredited by its participation in the normalization purge. Its place was taken by wholly new personnel, many of whom were former dissidents. In Slovakia, on the other hand, the new postcommunist elite included many former members of the communist nomenklatura, and also many "men of '68" who were involved in the attempts to reform communism.[47]

Before discussing the key individuals, it will be helpful to put the above claim into perspective through statistical comparison. The statistics show that there was "more elite circulation in the Czech Republic, and more elite reproduction in Slovakia."[48] Slovak communist leaders were more likely to retain their elite positions in 1993 (68.4%) than the Czech communist elites (51.1%). Moreover, 36.6% of the Czech elite in 1993 were new people, compared to 22.5% in Slovakia.[49]

Key Leaders in the Aftermath of the Velvet Revolution

The two leading figures on the post-communist Czech political scene—Václav Havel and Václav Klaus—serve as examples of the leaders who formed the Czech post-communist elite. Havel, a writer and a dramatist, was a leading Czech dissident. He was one of the first spokesmen for the "Charter 77" movement and one of the main authors of "A Few Sentences." As a result of his political activities, Havel was imprisoned three times and spent almost five years in prison.[50] In 1989, he became the leading figure of the

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[47] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 35.
[48] Ibid., 54.
[49] Ibid., 54.
[50] "Václav Havel - Biography," http://www.hrad.cz/cz/prezident_cr/havel.shtml (accessed November 14, 2007).

Velvet Revolution, resulting in his election, as the candidate of Civic Forum, as the President of Czechoslovakia by the Federal Assembly in December 1989 and again in July 1990. Havel was the moral leader of Czechoslovakia, and his life philosophy, as well as his many plays, books, and speeches, gained him worldwide respect.

Václav Klaus was the epitome of the kind of technocrat who rose to power following the Velvet Revolution. He graduated from the College of International Business of the University of Economics in Prague. He studied in Italy and also in the United States in the 1960s. He worked in the Institute of Economics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (ČSAV) until 1970, when he was fired for advocating western-style economics and for failing to join the Communist Party.[51] He then worked in the Czechoslovak State Bank as a clerk and only slowly did he manage to advance in his career, until he became a scientist at the Prognostic Institute of the ČSAV. He has been characterized as an "erudite economist with a clear vision of economic transformation, elegant, charming, sophisticated, and a Czech of an unprecedented intellect."[52]

While Havel and Klaus had completely different personalities and backgrounds, together, they achieved the creation of a relatively stable political regime in the midst of a turbulent Eastern Europe:

> Havel and Klaus both stood at the head of respective groups of like-minded individuals with similar backgrounds. Between them, these two groups composed the ruling Czech elite from the "velvet revolution" in 1989 to the "velvet divorce" in 1993. They partly divided the political spoils between them, and partly functioned as revolutionary leaders and revolutionary successors, with Klaus's group of monetary economists deposing Havel's dissidents and taking their place after the initial revolutionary euphoria died down.[53]

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[51] Václav Klaus, "Místo autobiografie: určující momenty a vlivy" [In Place of Autobiography: Determining Moments and Influences] (September 8, 1998): 6, http://www.klaus.cz/files/autobiografie.pdf (accessed November 16, 2007).
[52] Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled* [For the Second and the Last Time], 62.
[53] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 59.

In Slovakia, Alexander Dubček[54] became very popular, as did Ján Čarnogurský. However, the attention of the Slovak population was captured by Vladimír Mečiar, who, as stated above, is the primary example of a reform communist who became a member of the post-1989 leadership. He came from a relatively poor family, but still managed to have a successful political career. After studying in Moscow, he rose through the ranks of the Communist Party as a local leader of the Slovak Union of Youth. He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1969 for sympathizing with the Prague Spring. Nevertheless, he was allowed to obtain a law degree and worked as a corporate lawyer. In 1990, he became minister of interior.

Mečiar has been described as "...an expert in blabbing, an expert on everything, a man with the manners of a country farmer, rude, brash, often an aggressively acting Slovak with a probable inclination to melancholic paranoia."[55] In the 1990s, he was a "politician of power" who fit neither to the right nor to the left of the political spectrum.[56] For a decade, his extraordinary success in attracting voters contributed significantly to the achievement of Slovak independence. However, he also led the country away from the road that it had embarked upon at the end of 1989.

Key Leaders and the 1990 and 1992 Elections

The 1990 and 1992 general elections solidified the rise of Klaus and Mečiar and, thus, the differing Czech and the Slovak attitudes toward the communist past and future

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[54] Dubček was expelled from the Communist Party in 1970. During the Velvet Revolution, he supported both Civic Forum and Public Against Violence and was greeted by the public as symbol of democratic reform. He was elected Speaker of the Federal Assembly in 1989 and again in 1990. He died in a car accident in November 1992.
[55] Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled* [For the Second and the Last Time], 62.
[56] Ibid., 128.

reforms. In the Czech republic,[57] dissidents began coming back from abroad and often had political ambitions.[58] The political establishment also had to deal with the popular desire, particularly in the Czech part of the country, to purge the new political system of former communists and collaborators with the communist regime, and this created a challenging situation, especially for the moderate leftist parties trying to rebuild themselves.

In the June 1990 elections, Civic Forum (OF) won, with 53.2% of the Czech vote. In Slovakia, the Public Against Violence (VPN) also won, with 32.5% of the vote.[59] The two then formed a coalition federal government. Both the OF and the VPN were political umbrella organizations with very broad platforms. Instead of transforming themselves into regular political parties, they splintered into many organizations and parties between fall of 1990 and spring of 1991. First, Civic Forum split into several factions, with the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) led by the then finance minister, Klaus, becoming very quickly a well-organized and clearly defined right-wing party.

In Slovakia, the disintegration of PAV led to the removal of Mečiar as the Slovak Prime Minister. While he was the most popular Slovak politician, "his erratic and demagogic style and his insistence on defending a vaguely defined Slovak special status won him enemies in the federal government and among some Slovak colleagues."[60] Mečiar then founded his own party, the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), in May 1991.

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[57] Note concerning capitalization: Czech republic and Slovak republic refer to the two nations in the common state of Czechoslovakia. Following independence, the spelling is Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, with capital "R."
[58] Young, *The Breakup of Czechoslovakia*, 4-5.
[59] Krejčí and Machonin, *Czechoslovakia, 1918-92*, 216.
[60] The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Profile: Czech Republic and Slovakia, 1996-97," 35-36.

The June 1992 elections were affected very strongly by the discontent with the economic reforms, particularly within the Slovak population. There had been a flurry of activity in the economic sector in the period of 1990–1992 that involved decisions about currency convertibility, price controls, state budget, privatization of state enterprises, subsidies, and many other crucial issues. These reform measures, overseen by Klaus from his position as minister of finance, had an immediate negative effect, as reflected in the increase in consumer prices, inflation and unemployment, as well as the decrease in GDP, investment, and real wages.

The reforms had a more severe impact on Slovakia than on the Czech Lands. The opinion polls consistently showed significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction with the standard of living and the new government on the part of the Slovak population. According to a 1991 poll, 41% of Czechs versus only 29% of Slovaks reported that their family's economic position was satisfactory; 62% of Czechs versus only 30% of Slovaks favored the current political system to the communist system; and 63% of Czechs versus only 20% of Slovaks indicated that the Slovaks were treated fairly by the current government.[61] A growing number of Slovaks preferred a common state with power primarily vested in the two republics' national governments rather than the central government.

A February 1992 survey of the Center for Social Analysis in Bratislava, Slovakia showed an even more dramatic difference between the Czech and Slovak populations' views of the situation.[62] Whereas two-thirds of the Slovak population were dissatisfied

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[61] Young, *The Breakup of Czechoslovakia*, 12.

[62] Rüdiger Kipke, "Nejnovější politický vývoj v Československu v zrcadle veřejného mínění" [The Latest Political Development in Czechoslovakia in the Mirror of Public Opinion], in *Rozloučení s Československem: Příčiny a důsledky česko-slovenského rozchodu* [Farewell to Czechoslovakia: Causes

with the post-1989 political situation, less than 40% of Czechs were satisfied. Moreover, the Slovaks were more pessimistic than the Czechs about the future: whereas 70% of the Czech respondents indicated that the situation would improve within five years, only 50% of Slovak respondents answered in the same way. In regard to their attitudes toward a market economy, the Czech and the Slovak public opinions once again differed. In Slovakia, a market economy was less popular than in the Czech republic. By the same token, the Slovaks showed a more positive stance toward the past socialist regime than the Czechs: 36% of Slovaks identified themselves as supporters of the former regime, and only 41% of Slovak respondents viewed the new regime as more beneficial than the old one; on the other hand, only 13% of the Czech respondents indicated their preference for the former socialist regime, while 67% viewed the current regime as better than the old one.[63]

The economic ups and downs provided ammunition to Slovak nationalist politicians, who found it easier to attract supporters. They argued against reforms imposed by Prague, claiming these reforms were not suited to the Slovak reality. The Slovak elites began advocating policies specific to Slovakia's conditions.[64] To illustrate, the Slovak leadership often called for policies that reflected the dependence on heavy industry in Slovakia and the higher levels of unemployment caused by the reforms directed from Prague.

It does not, then, come as a surprise that the majority of Slovak voters, being dissatisfied with their quality of life, tended to support the nationalist parties, whose

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and Consequences of the Czech-Slovak Breakup], ed. Rüdiger Kipke and Karel Vodička (Prague: Český spisovatel, 1993), 47.

[63] Ibid., 48.

[64] For the discussion of the "Slovak specifics," see Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled* [For the Second and the Last Time], 47-48.

criticism of the central government policies resonated with those sections of the population that felt dissatisfied with their quality of life. Mečiar successfully linked the discontent with the economic reforms with the frustrated Slovak nationalism. He continued to vehemently criticize the policies of the federal government. In October 1990, Mečiar supported several nationalist initiatives, amongst those the Slovak national language law that pushed for the establishment of Slovak as the only official language in Slovakia.[65] He also suggested that Bratislava should charge Prague for the transit of oil and gas. Immediately after his ouster from the VPN at the beginning of 1991, Mečiar stated that he wanted confederation and began talking about a Slovak constitution proper.

These moves helped Mečiar gain more supporters, as the Slovaks continued to fear further worsening of the economic situation and to resent "Pragocentrism." The 1992 election program of Mečiar's HZDS advocated the establishment of a sovereign Slovakia that would be in charge of its own economy. The emphasis on reducing unemployment and providing a more effective social security system resonated with the Slovak public, resulting in Mečiar's victory in the June 1992 elections. His HZDS formed and led a left-oriented coalition.

The 1992 elections also marked the defeat of the Czech dissidents, who were replaced by managers, technocrats, and individuals who had not been active in the struggle against the communist dictatorship but also had not collaborated with the communists. Klaus was the leader of this group. His ODS won the June 1992 elections with the largest share of the Czech vote (33.7%), running on a platform of fast economic reforms and a commitment to maintaining the common Czechoslovak state in its existing

[65] The Slovak national language initiative failed to reach the majority in the Slovak Parliament.

form.[66] After the elections, ODS formed a stable coalition with the Christian Democratic Party. After the group around Klaus realized the strength and determination of Mečiar's group they decided that the continuation of Czechoslovakia was not possible, leading to the dissolution of the common state.

Klaus and Mečiar were the clear winners of the 1992 election. While the Czech 1992 cabinet contained many educated liberal economists and lawyers, the Slovak cabinet was almost exclusively composed of "former communists, economic dreamers, and legal amateurs," with important positions being awarded to former communists.[67] For example, communist general Jozef Tuchyňa became the Defense Minister. Within weeks of the June 1992 elections, Klaus and Mečiar became the main architects of the dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

The "Velvet Divorce"

Eyal argues that Czechoslovakia disintegrated as a result of "the clash between the interests and world-views" of the Czech and the Slovak elites, which was characterized by different experiences during the communist era.[68] Similarly, Karol Wolf, a prominent journalist and also a Slovak who accepted Czech citizenship following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, points out that many Slovak leaders acknowledged off the record that they saw the possibility of material gains in the idea of Slovak independence. According to one member of the Slovak National Party (SNS), "We knew that in the federation, we would remain only clowns. In Slovakia, however, we are bosses and no

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[66] For election results, see Czech Republic and Slovakia," *EIU Country Profile*, Economist Intelligence Unit, 1996-97, 6.
[67] Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled* [For the Second and the Last Time], 77.
[68] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, xxi.

one is allowed to make fools out of us."[69] This statement is a clear demonstration of the deeply rooted Slovak resentment at the unequal relationship with their Czech counterparts.

Příhoda claims the Czechs failed to understand the Slovak desire for equal standing within the common state and to fully recognize the more dramatic impact that the reforms had on the Slovak economy. The Czech self-righteous approach undermined the credibility of the Slovak advocates of the common state and economic transformation. According to Příhoda, writing in November 1992, only one month prior to the split of the country, the majority of the Czech population tended to view the relationship from the position of macroeconomics and had an "all or nothing" attitude: either Slovakia was to follow the Czech lead in the implementation of reforms, or it was to be discarded by dissolving the common state.[70] Finally, Karl Peter Schwarz claims that the dissolution of Czechoslovakia was a natural development at this point, because, after decades of unresolved conflict, the only force that might be have been capable of holding the two peoples together, survival, was no longer a factor . Thus, he claims the dissolution could have been prevented only if totalitarian means had been used. The federation fell apart "because its central idea lost its purpose...An attempt to preserve it would have meant the end of democracy."[71]

While it is difficult to single out the most important cause of the split, a compelling argument may be made that the role of the leaders was crucial. The Velvet Divorce was an event driven entirely by the elites, with Klaus and Mečiar completely in

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[69] Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled* [For the Second and the Last Time], 22.
[70] Příhoda, "Sociálně-psychologické aspekty soužití Čechů a Slováků" [Social-Psychological Aspects of the Coexistence of the Czechs and the Slovaks], 39.
[71] Schwarz, *Česi a Slováci* [The Czech and the Slovaks], 233.

charge. The majority of Czechs and Slovaks were for the maintenance of the federation or another form of common statehood, such as confederation, and there was a general lack of lack of enthusiasm for independence on the part of both the Czech and the Slovak public. Even though in Slovakia, the support was rising for confederation, which would give Slovakia many of the powers of a sovereign state, actual independence remained the least favorite option.[72] Nevertheless, the victors started the discussions of a separation within days of the 1992 elections.

More importantly for the discussion on the role of leadership, the data shows high levels of uncertainty among the population as to how the relations between the two nations should develop. Over one-fifth of the Czech respondents in the in the November 1991 and March 1992 surveys indicated that they did not know how the question of statehood should be resolved. The percentages were 13% and 14%, respectively, in Slovakia, which is also not insignificant. The data then highlights the critical role of the leaders in the post-1989 period. The population's uncertainty regarding the future under the conditions of transition from communism to democratization and market economy meant that the public was looking to their leaders for solutions. In the Czech republic, the public was anxious to move quickly on the reforms proposed by the government and, therefore, maintained high levels of support for Klaus. In Slovakia, Mečiar managed to mobilize the discontent with the economic reforms and the latent nationalism to his advantage.

Following a series of meetings between Klaus and Mečiar on the future of the federation, it became clear an agreement would not be possible. Already on July 4, 1992,

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[72] Salim Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky jako faktor konsolidace demokracie na Slovensku* [The Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic as a Factor for the Consolidation of Democracy in Slovakia] (Brno, Czech Republic: L. Marek, 2007), 22.

Mečiar announced the split of the federation and the creation of a new Slovak state independent from the Czechs. The negotiations failed as a result of both parties' unwillingness to compromise. On one hand, Mečiar assumed a position of brinkmanship by adopting a "non-negotiable" stance toward several issues, namely Havel's reappointment as president and the adoption of reforms demanded by Klaus. Moreover, Mečiar wanted to cancel federal TV and radio broadcasting, as he believed that it was being misused for political purposes by those who were against him. On the other hand, Klaus was stubborn about making any changes to the policies of economic transformation and the constitutional arrangement of the federation.[73] Klaus and Mečiar also refused to accommodate President Havel's calls for a popular referendum on the future of the state, with Klaus warning that a referendum could jeopardize the peacefully negotiated conditions and result in "chaos and a self-propelled disintegration of the state with grave consequences."[74] In the end, Czechoslovakia split formally on January 1, 1993 following ratification by the parliament.

The political elite was not accustomed to resolving conflicts and achieving consensus. The communist period was marked by the absence of a political culture that would encourage discussion of the statehood issue, incorporate public views in this discussion, and make a genuine effort to find solutions acceptable to both parties. As a result, the common state was divided not by the democratic means of a referendum but instead through an agreement between Klaus and Mečiar. This top-down decision was

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[73] Wolf, *Podruhé a naposled* [For the Second and the Last Time], 64.
[74] Ibid., 91.

accompanied by the bottom-up tolerance of a "passive, politically backward citizen groomed by the socialist system."[75]

The population was aware of the fact that the process was elite-driven, as demonstrated by a September 1992 survey on the public's perception of the reasons behind the split. Close to one-third of the population indicated that the political representatives of both countries were responsible for the dissolution.[76] The rest of the reasons cited varied but had as their common theme the placing of blame on the other party, with the Czechs putting the blame on the Slovak politicians and Slovak nationalism in general, and the Slovaks pointing to the concentration of power in Prague.[77]

As the case study chapters will show in greater detail, the importance of leaders and the rather passive stance of the population continued following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, influencing the two nations' accession into NATO and the EU. While the Czech leaders displayed pro-democratic and pro-western leaning, the Slovak leaders adopted authoritarian style of rule, which was in conflict with the principles of NATO and EU membership.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE EU AND NATO

Before venturing into a detailed discussion of Czech and Slovak compliance with NATO and EU membership conditionality in the next two chapters, it is necessary to provide a context for this compliance process—specifically, a discussion of the relations between Czechoslovakia and the two institutions in the period between the end of

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[75] Kipke, "Nejnovější politický vývoj v Československu v zrcadle veřejného mínění" [The Latest Political Development in Czechoslovakia in the Mirror of Public Opinion], 55.
[76] Ibid., 54.
[77] Ibid., 48.

communism in 1989 and the dissolution of the federation in January 1993. Such an introduction will be helpful, since the Czech and Slovak policies toward NATO and the EU were rooted in the post-1989 Czechoslovak efforts for closer cooperation with the West and were, to a large extent, overseen by the same leaders.

Czechoslovakia underwent a dramatic ideological shift in a matter of several months following the fall of the communist regime. The new government elected in the first democratic election in June 1990 began to formulate a new foreign and defense policy, with special attention given to the alignment with international law and conventions as well as the establishment of links to existing institutions, namely the then European Community (EC),[78] the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Western European Union (WEU), and NATO.

It soon became clear that the orientation of Czechoslovakia would be toward the EU and NATO. This development was largely determined by two sets of factors: ideological (normative) orientation and geopolitical concerns. The Czechoslovak leaders were proclaiming their desire to "return to Europe" and to solidify the transition to democracy. The EU and NATO represented the guarantees of such a development. On the geopolitical front, new threats began to emerge despite the fact that the security risks stemming from the Cold War had dissipated. On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, leading to the first Gulf War. In 1991, closer to home, the Soviet government bullied the Baltic states prior to conceding their right to independence, while, in Yugoslavia, hostilities broke out that led to the violent dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation. The August 1991 coup d'état in the Soviet Union, combined with outbreaks of violence in

[78] The European Union (EU) replaced the European Community (EC) on November 1, 1993 when the Treaty of Maastricht entered into force.

Nagorno-Karabakh, Moldova, Georgia, and elsewhere, served as further examples of the kind of security threats that Czechoslovakia faced in this new post-Cold War environment.

The desire on the part of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and, by the same token, Czechoslovakia, to join the EU and NATO was also motivated by the lack of viable alternatives. The Czechoslovak options included neutrality, enhanced roles for the CSCE and the WEU, bilateral relations with western European states, rapprochement with Russia, and the Visegrad Group.

The emergence of the neutrality option, also referred to as the "historical" option, is understandable given Czechoslovakia's history.[79] The proponents of the historical option warned against an over-reliance on a single security provider, arguing that such an approach had failed before. The analogies were, of course, Munich 1938, when the western powers sacrificed Czechoslovakia to Hitler, and the 1968 Prague Spring, after which Soviet troops were stationed on Czechoslovak territory. The Czech and Slovak population was, therefore, wary of new alliances.

This sentiment was also reflected in the calls for the creation of pan-European security arrangements under the auspices of an enhanced CSCE that would aim to prevent a return to Cold War confrontation. These calls were especially strong in Czechoslovakia. The CSCE's attractiveness consisted in the fact that it included all European states together with Russia and, thus, would significantly diminish tensions by

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[79] Antonín Rašek, "Nelehká přeměna armády a zrod bezpečnostní politiky [The Uneasy Transformation of the Army and the Genesis of Security Policy], in *Bezpečnostní politika České republiky – výzvy a problémy* [Security Policy of the Czech Republic – Challenges and Issues] (Prague: Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic – AVIS, 2004), 11.

enabling all the states to raise security concerns.[80] It was to become an institution with influence from Vancouver to Vladivostok.[81]

President Havel suggested at the May 1990 Parliamentary Assembly meeting of the Council of Europe that both NATO and the Warsaw Pact should be transformed into a new security system that would include all European countries and provide a security guarantee for the entire continent.[82] Havel proposed the creation of a European Security Committee whose secretariat would be located in Prague.

Achieving full membership in the WEU and thus gaining the protection of and cooperation with the major European powers—Germany, France, and the United Kingdom—was also deemed unsatisfactory. The WEU lacked the economic aspect of the EU and, due in large part to the absence of US security guarantees, the WEU was perceived as lacking the military capacity to deal with potential conflicts with Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). There was also a historically rooted reluctance to pursue full membership in the WEU, given the memories of Munich and the abandonment of Czechoslovakia by its allies.

The bilateral option was also found to be a less than ideal solution by Czechoslovakia. Returning to the Russian orbit was never an acceptable alternative. While an economic and security rapprochement with Russia was considered for its value in regard to possible future Russian ambitions in the region, it was rejected based on the

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[80] The CSCE was established through the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 with the goal of promoting international norms and law, non-aggression, and peaceful settlement of disputes. The original members included 35 states from Europe and North America. The CSCE was renamed the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in January 1995.

[81] Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security*, 62-63.

[82] Luboš Dobrovský, "Stručný nástin polistopadového vývoje zahraniční politiky a její vliv na formování politiky bezpečnostní, respektive obranné [Brief Outline of the Post-November Development of Foreign Policy and its Influence on the Formation of Security Policy, or Defense Policy], in *Bezpečnostní politika České republiky – výzvy a problémy* [Security Policy of the Czech Republic – Challenges and Issues] (Prague: Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic – AVIS, 2004), 41.

history of Soviet occupation, Russia's disastrous economic performance, and its heavy-handedness in the Baltics and Chechnya. Germany was never really a serious option for Czechoslovakia due to the bitter experiences of the 1930s and 40s. Moreover, Germany was very much anchored in NATO and the EU, and it was a strong proponent of multilateralism. The French option was more popular amongst the Czechoslovak elites, primarily for its value as a counterbalance against a unified Germany. However, the economic and military strength of France was deemed insufficient to stimulate democratization and economic growth and counter the influence of Russia.

The Visegrad group, composed of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, emerged as the "leading example of cooperation in the former Soviet bloc" in April 1990, under the leadership of Czechoslovak President Václav Havel.[83] The two key areas of cooperation in the Visegrad group concerned the goals of pulling out of the Soviet orbit, namely the Warsaw Pact, and integrating into the structures of the EU and NATO. The countries agreed to coordinate their efforts to diminish the Soviet influence, achieve membership in the EU and NATO, and gain recognition of their new regimes by the West.[84]

Cooperation was initially fruitful, with the three countries coordinating their negotiations with the EU regarding the Association Agreements, appealing to NATO for closer cooperation, concluding security agreements with one another, and signing the Central European Free Trade Agreement to gradually do away with tariffs in 1992.

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[83] Matthew Rhodes, "Post-Visegrad Cooperation in East Central Europe," *East European Quarterly* 33. 1 (March 1999): 51.

[84] Martin Dangerfield, "The Visegrád Group in the Expanded European Union: From Pre-accession to Post-accession Cooperation" (paper presented at the EUSA Ninth Biennial International Conference, Austin, TX, USA, March 31-April 2, 2005): 1-29, 3, http://aei.pitt.edu/3167/02/EUSA_paper_2005.doc (accessed April 8, 2006).

However, the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in January 1993 and the rejection of the deepening of cooperation within Visegrad by the new Czech government in favor of closer cooperation with the EU and NATO led to the decline of the group.

The lack of alternatives, then, led to the decision of the Czechoslovak leaders to achieve closer cooperation with the EU and NATO. The country first turned its attention to the EU. The EU was perceived as the only institution that could encourage and support the transition to democracy and market economy, and fulfill the desire to "return to Europe." The EU was also considered the ideal means of access to Western prosperity and security. It became the model to adopt and the institution to join.

Czechoslovakia and the EU

The EU showed great reluctance to give the aspirants any membership promises and targets in the early 1990s. The progress was slow, as all member states had to agree on the way to proceed. The member states were divided over enlargement. On one hand, most members were eager to offer trade and other benefits through various bilateral treaties and multilateral frameworks in an effort to stabilize their neighbors in the East. On the other hand, they also feared potential security and economic backlash in the form of mass migration from the East to the West, an influx of cheap labor from the East causing a decline in salaries and a rise in unemployment in their countries, and the efflux of capital. Furthermore, the most powerful EU members—France, Germany, and the United Kingdom—had different preferences in regard to "widening" (enlargement) and "deepening" (reforming the EU institutions). They disagreed on the scope of enlargement as well as on institutional governance and EU budget reforms that were to be carried out

prior to the acceptance of any new members. The issue of governance involved discussions about the reform of institutions initially designed for six member states in the 1950s for the purpose of accommodating a large number of new members. EU member states grappled with questions regarding the distribution of votes in the Council, changes to the power of the European Parliament, and the further development of the European Foreign and Security Policy. Reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and regional development policy were the main points of contention regarding the EU budget.

France was at first reluctant to support enlargement. It was worried about the growing influence of Germany in Europe, as Germany was geographically positioned to benefit the most from closer cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Enlargement was seen as having "the potential for making Germany the central power in a looser and weaker Community."[85] France gradually came on board with enlargement, but it was an adamant proponent of deepening prior to enlargement, advocating stronger intergovernmental institutions. France feared that enlargement without deepening would lead to "a mere free trade zone in which coalitions and imbalanced relationships between states could soon reappear," a state of affairs the was inimical to France's goal of the EU becoming a superpower in the future.[86] France was also against any major modifications to the CAP, as it feared competition with its producers, who greatly benefited from the CAP.

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[85] John Pinder, "The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union," in *Uneasy Allies: British-German Relations and European Integration since 1945*, ed. Klaus Larres (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2000), 145.

[86] Jean-Marc Trouille, "France, Germany and the Eastwards Expansion of the EU: Towards a Common *Ostpolitik*," in *EU Expansion to the East: Prospects and Problems*, ed. Hilary Ingham and Mike Ingham (Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA, USA: E. Elgar, 2002), 54-55.

Britain had the opposite perspective to that of France in regard to the deepening versus widening debate. Traditionally unwilling to subjugate its domestic policy fully to the EU, Britain favored a "wider" Europe that would have the effect of slowing down integration and preventing further steps toward the sharing of sovereignty.[87] Moreover, Britain viewed enlargement as having a positive impact on European security, stability, and prosperity.

Germany, unlike France and Britain, assumed a positive stance toward both deepening and widening. Both processes were in Germany's interest, as they served to make a unified Germany seem less threatening to others. Germany was an adamant advocate of enlargement from the early 1990s. It had, obviously, a strategic interest in the creation of stable and affluent neighbors to the East of its borders.[88]

Germany was also in favor of deepening, but its idea of deepening differed from France's. Unlike France, which advocated the intergovernmental approach, Germany demanded a stronger European Parliament. Moreover, Germany, unlike France, called for the streamlining of the CAP and of the Structural Funds prior to enlargement. Germany, the "paymaster" of Europe and the largest net contributor to the EU budget, was afraid of having to shoulder the majority of the enlargement costs resulting from ever more members gaining assistance through the CAP.[89]

Due to the veto rule governing the EU decision-making process, all EU members had to be on board with enlargement and the institutional changes necessary to minimize

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[87] John Pinder, "The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union," 145.
[88] Barbara Lippert, Kirsty Hughes, Heather Grabbe, and Peter Becker, eds., *British and German Interests in EU Enlargement: Conflict and Cooperation* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001), 15.
[89] Trouille, "France, Germany and the Eastwards Expansion of the EU: Towards a Common *Ostpolitik*," 59-60.

the financial costs and political risks of accommodating new members. The progress was, therefore, tedious and slow, particularly from the aspirants' point of view. As a result of the intra-EU divisions and apprehensions, the EU initially offered only a limited association. It renewed diplomatic relations with the post-communist countries and softened its approach on import quotas on a number of products. It also created the Phare (Poland and Hungary, Aid for the Reconstruction of Economies) Program in 1989, which assisted Poland and Hungary through the provision of technical expertise and financial support.[90]

In December 1991, another step was taken: the signing of the Association, or Europe, Agreements between the European Commission and Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, by which the three countries gained associate status and preferential trading relations with the EU. The Europe Agreements established special arrangements between the EU and the three states of Central and Eastern Europe regarding economic integration and political links. Nevertheless, the Commission was adamant about avoiding the perception of any link between association and membership. In fact, it stressed that accession was a completely separate issue to be addressed at a later date. The aspirants were disappointed with the Agreements, in part because of the restrictions placed on trade and the movement of labor, but primarily because of the lack of a clear link between association and accession.[91]

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[90] The Phare Program was gradually extended to include the ten applicants from Central and Eastern Europe as well as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In 2001, the CARDS program (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stability in the Balkans) was formed to assists the Balkan countries.

[91] Michael J. White, *A Wider Europe: The Process and Politics of European Union Enlargement* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 32-35.

The June 1993 European Council meeting in Copenhagen represents a landmark in the process of EU enlargement. At Copenhagen, the member state leaders accepted enlargement to the East, determining that "the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union," and thereby shifting the enlargement question from "if" to "when."[92] However, the Council also provided the applicants with a set a set of conditions known as the Copenhagen Criteria and indicated that these would have to be fulfilled prior to any new applicant being accepted. As discussed in Chapter II, the criteria concern issues of democracy and market economy, as well as the ability to satisfy the conditions of the *acquis communautaire*. The EU insisted that it would closely monitor performance and compliance. Once again, the aspirants realized that a long period of transition lay ahead of their entry into the EU.

This transition was facilitated by several mechanisms, namely the Pre-accession Strategy, Phare, National Programs for the Adoption of the *acquis*, annual reports by the European Commission, screening, and negotiations. In 1997, the EU published *Agenda 2000*, which included a proposal for EU reforms that would have to be carried out prior to enlargement. Based on *Agenda 2000*, the Commission proposed opening negotiations with those candidates that were considered the most advanced—the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and Cyprus.

Accession negotiations began in March 1998, following the decision taken at the London Council meeting. The first step entailed the process of screening, i.e. comparing legislation of the applicants to the EU legislation. After this initial stage, the actual negotiations on the 31 chapters of the EU *acquis* were initiated. The 1999 Kosovo crisis

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[92] European Commission, "Enlargement of the European Union: An Historic Opportunity," (2001): 4, 8, http://ec.europa.eu/spain/pdf/ampliacion_ue_2001_en.pdf (accessed February 17, 2007).

prompted the EU to open negotiations with all 12 applicants, including Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, and Malta (but excluding Turkey). Screening was taking place in parallel with the European Commission's negotiations with the foreign ministries of each applicant. Successful screening and negotiations resulted in the provisional closure of chapters, with final negotiations concluded in December 2002.

December 2002 marked the end of negotiations with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The December 2002 Copenhagen Summit negotiations between the EU members and the candidates resulted in the adoption of a package for the admission of ten new members to the EU. Finally, after the accession treaty was signed in Athens in April 2003, and the EU members and acceding countries ratified it during the period March--September 2003, the EU officially enlarged on May 1, 2004.[93]

Czechoslovakia and NATO

As stated above, by 1991 the countries of Central and Eastern Europe understood that EU membership would be a goal that would only be reached in the long term. With the EU doors closed to them for the foreseeable future and other organizations deemed less desirable, NATO became the institution of choice for the former communist bloc. The desire to join NATO, then, emerged gradually. NATO was not an obvious option due to both internal and external factors. Czechoslovakia's initial disregard of NATO was rooted in a wariness regarding new alliances following the decades of Soviet occupation. Furthermore, as discussed above, Czechoslovak leaders envisioned the dissolution of the Cold War security organizations and the creation of a pan-European security system

[93] Jacoby, *The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO*, 42-44.

under the auspices of the CSCE. Finally, the period of early 1990s was characterized by a concentration on internal issues, namely, building institutions and transitioning to a market economy, which was the domain of the EU. Joining NATO, therefore, was not in the forefront of Czechoslovak policy goals.

The lack of interest in NATO was also derived from NATO's uncertain future and the lack of consensus on the part of the member states as to the mission of the Alliance.[94] The debates about the relevance of NATO began shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. For example, John Mearsheimer claimed that the absence of the Soviet threat, or "the glue that holds NATO together," would prompt the Americans to withdraw from Europe, thereby weakening the Alliance.[95] Similarly, Kenneth Waltz argued in his testimony in before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee in November 1990 that "NATO is a disappearing thing. It is a question of how long it is going to remain as a significant institution even though its name may linger on."[96]

The uncertainty regarding NATO's future role was exacerbated by an initial decline in America's interest in Europe, as well as efforts on the part of major European NATO members to assume greater responsibility for their own security. Moreover, the Europeans were adamant about not doing anything that would antagonize Russia and lead to a new East-West conflict. Several NATO allies advocated the use of other tools to ensure European security. The main institutional alternatives to NATO proposed by the Western Europeans included the CSCE and, to a lesser degree, the Western European

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[94] For detailed discussion of the 1999 NATO enlargement, see Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997*; and Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

[95] John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15.1 (Summer 1990): 52.

[96] McCalla, "NATO's Persistence after the Cold War," 469-470.

Union (WEU) and the Euro-Corps.[97] NATO initiated closer cooperation with the CSCE. It supported the exchange of information with the CSCE, participated in seminars sponsored by the organization, invited military officials from CSCE member-states to NATO Headquarters, and supported special CSCE interparliamentary conferences on European security.

France's position on NATO enlargement was affected by its desire to minimize the influence of the United States in Europe and to strengthen the EU's position in international affairs.[98] It was a strong advocate of the development of the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) under the auspices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). France's desire to increase the defense role of the EU was reflected in its support for a revitalized WEU.[99] France wanted to turn the WEU into the European pillar within NATO. However, other EU members, namely Germany and the United Kingdom, rejected the idea of a military command structure independent of NATO, as they desired the strong presence of the United States in European security through NATO.[100]

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[97] John S. Duffield, "NATO's Functions after the Cold War," *Political Science Quarterly* 109, no. 5 (Winter, 1994-1995): 763-787; Glaser, "Why NATO is Still Best."

[98] Paul Gallis, "France: NATO's 'Renovation' and Enlargement," in *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates*, ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 55-73.

[99] The WEU was founded in the 1948 as the Brussels Treaty Organization by Britain, France, and the Benelux countries. It was originally called the Western Union Defense Organization (WUDO), and its objective was to provide the members with security against Germany as well as the Soviet Union. The Organization was transformed into the Western European Union when Germany and Italy were admitted in 1954.

[100] Paul Cornish, "European Security: The End of Architecture and the New NATO," *International Affairs* 72, no. 4 (October 1996): 768.

Germany, while being an early advocate of EU enlargement, did not assume the same position on NATO enlargement.[101] While it wanted to stabilize the countries to the East in order to minimize the security risks of turmoil in the fragile democracies, it did not see the urgent need to enlarge NATO. Moreover, Germany was adamant about not antagonizing Russia. Therefore, the German policy was to encourage loose cooperation and to support the CSCE in the early 1990s. Not until 1994, when the U.S. pro-enlargement position emerged and it became clear the CSCE lacked security guarantees and military capabilities, did Germany come fully on board with enlargement of the Alliance.

The United Kingdom assumed a position favorable to closer cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Initially apprehensive of a resurgent Russia, Britain supported a lose cooperation between NATO and the aspirants via the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) founded in 1991. It was also active in creating a link between the WEU and the post-communist countries. [102] Nevertheless, as a strong supporter of the United States and the Clinton administration's enlargement policy, Britain welcomed the prospect of enlargement in 1994.

The United States became the driving force behind NATO's enlargement to the east. However, this position did not emerge clearly until 1994. Until then, Washington had been opposed to enlargement beyond the united Germany. The proponents of a more robust enlargement were "few and scattered over different branches of government, the

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[101] Daniel J. Whiteneck, "Germany: Consensus Politics and Changing Security Paradigms," in *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 35-53.

[102] Sir Timothy Garden, "The United Kingdom: Making Strategic Adjustments," in *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 75-89.

bureaucracy, academia, and society."[103] Gradually, President Clinton made NATO's expansion a part of his "democratic enlargement" policy and openly committed the United States to enlargement in his 1994 speeches in Prague and Warsaw.[104] The United States was also instrumental in the creation of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework, which eventually became the unofficial vehicle for preparing the candidates for membership.[105].

NATO's transformation was accelerated by geopolitical developments in Europe and around the world. The power vacuum left behind by the collapse of communism was seen as having the potential to become a source of future conflicts, in the form of both local instabilities and the return of conflicts from the past. It was becoming clear that the building of democracy and the transition to market economy would be more difficult than envisioned, with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe grappling with political and social upheavals, the negative impact of economic reforms, criminality, and other problems. Furthermore, the long-suppressed desire for self-determination produced nationalism and conflicts in some parts of Europe, namely Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The tumultuous political and economic developments in the Soviet Union were of particular concern to the rest of Europe. Finally, the Persian Gulf War served as a reminder of the potentially disastrous effect of conflicts on Europe's fringe.

These developments encouraged NATO members to identify a new role for the Alliance, proceed with its transformation, and become involved in stabilizing Central and

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[103] Frank Schimmelfennig, "NATO's Enlargement to the East: An Analysis of Collective Decision-making," EAPC-NATO Individual Fellowship Report 1998-2000, 33. http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/98-00/schimmelfennig.pdf (accessed August 31, 2007).

[104] Gale A. Mattox, "The United States: Stability through Engagement and Enlargement," in *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates,* ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 15-33.

[105] The United States, however, witnessed a heated debate over burden-sharing of the enlargement costs during the 1997 ratification debate. See Kugler, "Costs of NATO Enlargement."

Eastern Europe. In the first half of the 1990s, NATO reinvented itself, shifting from an alliance defined by its relationship with the Soviet Union to an institution characterized by the preservation and promotion of a common identity of democratic principles, and this attracted the post-communist countries.[106] NATO reconstituted its identity and its mission, which allowed it to preserve itself and to continue to play a key role in European security.

The July 1990 London Declaration brought to the forefront the idea of engaging the post-communist countries based on the Alliance's common values. NATO declared it must be "even more an agent of change" that would "help build the structures of a more united continent, supporting security and stability with the strength of our shared faith in democracy, the rights of the individual, and the peaceful resolution of disputes."[107]

Similarly, the December 1990 North Atlantic Council meeting[108] and the 1991 New Strategic Concept[109] highlighted the role of norms and values in NATO's treatment of its eastern neighbors and reaffirmed NATO's interest in the developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The Concept also expresses a desire to influence those developments through dialogue and cooperation. The Concept refrained, however, from any discussion of potential enlargement:

> The Allies...will seek to develop broader and productive patterns of bilateral and multilateral co-operation in all relevant fields of European security... Such partnership between the members of the Alliance and other nations in dealing

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[106] Michael C. Williams, *Culture and Security: Symbolic Power and the Politics of International Security* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 72.
[107] NATO, "London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance," London, 5-6 July 1990, NATO On-line library, http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c900706a.htm (accessed October 10, 2007).
[108] NATO, "Final Communiqué," Brussels, 17-18 December 1990, NATO On-line Library, http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c901218a.htm (accessed February 7, 2008).
[109] NATO, "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept," Rome, 7-8 November 1991, NATO online library, Art. 7 and 9, http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c911107a.htm (accessed February 7, 2008).

> with specific problems will be an essential factor in moving beyond past divisions toward one Europe whole and free.[110]

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe were dissatisfied with such a low level of cooperation with the Alliance. By 1991, they had become aware of the security risks in their neighborhood and the failure of the CSCE to transform itself into an effective collective security organization. They had also come to the conclusion that accession into the EU would take a long time. As a result, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe came to view NATO as a key provider of security and stability in Europe, began to seek closer ties with the Alliance, and began to consider future membership.

Czechoslovak President Havel's March 1991 speech at NATO's headquarters demonstrates the shift in attitude toward NATO quite well. Even though Havel still expressed hope for "a united Europe as a continent of security" in the future, he also acknowledged that the presence of problems and threats in Europe necessitated immediate solutions. He asked for greater involvement of NATO in Central and Eastern Europe, arguing that "an alliance of countries united by a commitment to the ideal of freedom and democracy should not remain permanently closed to neighboring countries which are pursuing the same goals. History has taught us that certain values are indivisible; if they are threatened in one place, they are directly or indirectly threatened everywhere."[111]

Czechoslovakia also started pursuing greater concessions from NATO by coordinating policies with the other two members of the Visegrad group, Hungary and

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[110] Ibid., Art. 29.
[111] Vaclav Havel, Speech at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, March 21, 1991, http://old.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/index_uk.html (accessed November 15, 2007).

Poland. In October 1991, the Visegrad group countries demanded greater security guarantees and a commitment to enlargement from NATO at their summit in Krakow.

NATO reacted to the calls from Central and Eastern Europe by creating the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in October 1991. The aim of the NACC was to facilitate a dialogue between the Alliance and Central and Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia joined the NACC in December 1991, together with eight other post-communist countries. However, the Czechoslovak government did not considers the NACC sufficient, and it joined other post-communist countries in demanding a more structured framework for the accession process. NATO responded with the creation of the Partnership for Peace program at the January 1994 Summit in Brussels.[112] Once again, NATO refrained from making any link between PfP participation and future membership.[113] Nevertheless, the PfP program eventually proved to be more than "a stalling tactic to defer NATO enlargement."[114] It became a successful vehicle for wider and deeper political and military cooperation and consultation in the Euro-Atlantic arena and for the preparation of interested partners for membership through exposure to the Alliance's norms, requirements, and procedures.[115]

Until 1994, then, the prospects for NATO enlargement were unclear, as the allies first had to restore the cohesion of the Alliance, reach a consensus as to NATO's mission in the wake of the Cold War, and define relations with Russia. Once these debates were resolved, however, NATO enlargement proceeded relatively quickly. Unlike the EU, NATO did not have to drastically reform its institutions to accommodate new members.

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[112] Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997*, 37.
[113] Kruzel, "Partnership for Peace and the Transformation of North Atlantic Security."
[114] Vernon Penner, "Restructuring for the Future: Partnership for Peace," *Strategic Review* 97 (December 1996), http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/h6.html (accessed November 10, 2007).
[115] Russia signed the Framework Document on June 22, 1994.

Furthermore, NATO had an advantage over the EU in that the presence of the United States, whose military preponderance and attendant security clout gave it a decision-making power in NATO of which there was no equivalent in the EU, enabled NATO to act more quickly.

Following the 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement" that determined the "how" and "why" issues of expansion, NATO initiated the 16+1 dialogues with nations interested in joining the Alliance. By the end of 1996, twelve countries, including the Czech Republic and Slovakia, expressed their desire to join the Alliance.[116] The process was greatly encouraged by the United States, with President Clinton suggesting in October 1996 that new members would join in 1999, advancing the prospects of enlargement "from a dialogue over enlargement to the issuance of invitations."[117] Meanwhile, the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act was passed by the U.S. Congress.[118]

Once the allies reached a conclusion as to the scope of enlargement, NATO issued an invitation to the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to begin accession talks at the Summit in Madrid on July 8, 1997. At the same time, the text of the Summit declaration suggested the possible membership of Slovenia, Romania, and the three Baltic states at a later date. Following ratification by NATO members and the applicants, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland were formally accepted into NATO during the celebrations commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Alliance at the Summit in Washington on March 12, 1999. Slovakia finally became a NATO member in 2004.

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[116] Victor S. Papacosma, Sean Kay, and Mark R. Rubin, eds. *NATO after Fifty Years* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2001), 122.
[117] Grayson, *Strange Bedfellows*, 98. See also Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate*.
[118] Solomon, 99.

As this brief summary illustrates, Czechoslovakia developed policies toward the EU and NATO in the early 1990s that centered on developing ever closer relations. This initial consensus as to the desirability and necessity of the establishment of an association with both institutions and eventual membership was carried over to Czechoslovakia's two successor states. This section also shows the preponderance of the two institutions over the candidate countries. Their concerns regarding the potential adverse effects of enlargement became institutionalized in the NATO and EU conditionality, as expressed in NATO's Study on Enlargement and the EU's Copenhagen criteria. As the case studies in the next two chapters will illustrate, the Czech and the Slovak leadership approached the conditions of accession with different degrees of urgency and desire to satisfy them, leading to the distinct Czech and Slovak experiences.

SUMMARY

As this chapter demonstrates, the Czech and Slovak leadership that dominated the discussion of and shaped the policy toward NATO and EU membership was molded by the historical experiences of the two nations. The legacy of statehood, combined with the events of the Prague Spring of 1968 and the period of normalization, were of particular importance with respect to the formation of the Czech and Slovak elites. The history of statehood affected the leaders' attitudes toward not only Czechoslovakia but also the place of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in Europe after the Cold War. From the perspective of democratization and implementation of market economy, the Czechs had the advantage of being able to refer to the very successful First Republic, which flourished under their leadership and was one of the most successful and developed

democracies of the period. Moreover, the grounding in the Western liberal tradition persisted throughout the communist era, as exemplified by the significant group of Czech dissidents. All of these factors resulted in rather positive attitudes toward the presence of the Czech Republic in the NATO and EU structures.

The Slovaks, on the other hand, did not have such reference points. They did not associate themselves with the First Republic as strongly as the Czechs and, therefore, did not adopt it as a source of inspiration. Furthermore, they lacked a historical experience in nation-building. The only experience with statehood was the Slovak state under Nazi Germany, which had negative connotations due to the collaboration of the Slovak leadership with the Nazi regime. Moreover, the Slovak elite lacked a larger, western-thinking group of individuals similar to the group of Czech dissidents. While pro-democratic and pro-liberal elements certainly existed in Slovakia after 1989, they were trailing behind the populist and nationalistic elements, represented primarily by Mečiar and his party.

The Slovak public was captivated by Mečiar's advocacy of the Slovak interest in the face of the dramatic transformation brought on by the fall of communism. The emphasis placed on the Slovak interest, combined with the references to the historical struggle of Slovaks for statehood and calls for nationhood, helped Mečiar secure his position in the period during and after the Velvet Divorce.

As this chapter demonstrates, the events that occurred after the fall of communism and prior to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia placed an extraordinary responsibility on the Czech and the Slovak leaders. This responsibility was even greater considering the fact that the people were willing to follow their leaders even if they did not necessarily

agree with their ideas and goals, as demonstrated by the public's lack of enthusiasm for independence. The post-1989 leaders, namely Havel, Klaus, and Mečiar, continued to play an important role in the two countries after independence. They dominated the discussion of and shaped the policy toward NATO and EU membership, thus affecting the Czech and Slovak accession to the two organizations.

CHAPTER IV

THE CZECH ACCESSION TO NATO

As shown in the previous chapter, the Czech Republic made a clear choice as to its geopolitical orientation very early on. The Czech Republic had an advantage over most other post-communist countries in that a great number of its leaders had either been members of the dissident movement during the communist era or technocrats who had not been co-opted by the regime. These men and women, many of whom had been the driving force behind the foreign and security policy of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic between the end of 1989 and the dissolution of the country, were adamant about instituting democratic and market economy reforms and thus taking the Czech Republic "back to Europe." A consensus existed among most leaders and the major political parties on the need to guide the country toward NATO and EU membership. As a result, Czech policymaking was dominated by this goal.

The role of the elites in the achievement of this goal was crucial. The country had to comply with NATO and EU conditionality, a complex process involving reform in all the spheres of policy and the synchronization of its national and sub-national systems with the EU's and NATO's ways of doing business. Compliance was a top-down process where the government implemented the necessary measures. The role of the leaders in the success of the compliance effort was even more significant when considered in the light of the generally lukewarm attitude of the Czech public toward NATO and EU membership. The public was generally removed from foreign policy questions due to a combination of lack of influence on, interest in, and knowledge of foreign policy. This

was especially true in the case of NATO membership, where the Czech leaders did not consult the public. Ratification was conducted through a vote in the parliament without a public referendum. A referendum for NATO accession was not administered due to the failure of the ruling coalition and the opposition to overcome disagreements concerning legislation on the referendum prior to NATO accession.

The NATO Summit in Madrid, which took place on July 8–9, 1997, was a watershed event in the process of domestic compliance with NATO conditionality. Even though the Czech leadership implemented several reforms—namely, implementation of the democratic control of the military and a reduction of troops and equipment—in the period before NATO's announcement of its decision to enlarge in Madrid, it lagged behind in many other spheres. With respect to especially difficult issues, such as formulating security strategies and concepts, increasing military spending, and carrying out reform of the armed forces, "political rhetoric prevailed over concrete practical steps."[1] The prospect of membership in the near future served as a stimulus for the implementation of reforms in the more complex and difficult issue-areas. The period between the Madrid Summit and the formal accession into NATO at the Washington Summit in April 1999 presented the Czech leaders with a timetable that energized their efforts and encouraged them to move from the "*proclaimed* preparedness" to the "*real* state of such preparedness."[2]

The remainder of this chapter discusses in greater detail the extent to which norms and interests were part of the public debate on accession into NATO and of the compliance dynamic in the Czech Republic in the period from independence through

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[1] Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 1.
[2] Ibid., 1.

1999, when the country joined the Alliance. What becomes apparent in this discussion is the fact that the Czech leadership found it easier to gain accession into NATO because two of the major criteria for acceptance--democracy and market economy--represented goals that they had already been seriously pursuing prior to their taking an interest in joining NATO. The accession to NATO was also facilitated by the existence of a consensus on the elite level regarding the desire to join NATO. The elites used both normative and rationalist arguments in their advocacy of the country's accession into NATO. The balance of the arguments favored interests, as a reflection of the desire to ensure the country's security.

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section describes the structure of the Czech leadership in greater detail, highlighting the presence of many former dissidents and technocrats in official posts and their role in shaping the Czech foreign and security policy. These leaders translated their communist-era pro-democracy and pro-western views and activities into practical policies aimed at achieving EU and NATO membership. They established a consensus both within the successive governing coalitions regarding the desirability of integration into the Euro Atlantic institutions, preparing the ground for and ensuring successful compliance with EU and NATO conditionality.

The second section is the case study of the Czech Republic's accession into NATO. It deals with the specifics of the quest for NATO membership in three parts: elite level, public attitude, and the country's compliance with NATO conditionality. It examines the factors that led to the country's decision to seek membership and the arguments offered in favor of or against membership. It describes the attitudes toward

NATO held by the elites in the major political parties and successive Czech governments in the period 1993–1999. Special attention is paid to the main arguments presented both in favor of and against membership by the Czech leaders. It concludes that both normative and interest-based arguments were made in support of NATO membership, with the interest-based rationale being predominant as a result of geopolitical concerns. The chapter also analyzes public attitudes toward NATO membership. It highlights the absence of a substantive information campaign and public debate, as well as the low level of support on the part of the Czech public for the Alliance prior to membership. Finally, the intricacies of the Czech Republic's compliance with NATO conditionality are discussed. The section describes the effect of conditionality on democracy, military reform, and civil-military relations. The analysis confirms the effectiveness of NATO conditionality, with the 1997 Madrid Summit and the pending membership having served as impetuses for the implementation of reforms.

CZECH ELITES AND THE NATO AND EU ACCESSION

Chapter III described the evolution of the Czech and Slovak post-communist leadership and the historical experiences that shaped them. The Prague Spring of 1968 and the period of normalization that followed were of special significance, as they affected the Czech elites in a significant way. Many Czech intellectuals and writers went into dissent and many technocrats refused to be co-opted by the communist regime. A large number of these individuals became members of the post-Communist elites and members of the Czechoslovak and, after 1993, Czech governments. These are the people who shaped the debate concerning the country's membership in NATO and the EU.

This dissertation does not argue that these individuals were morally superior to those who did not join the dissent or those who were members of the Communist Party. Czech politics was characterized by the same low political culture, corruption scandals, irregularities in party finances, botched privatization of state-owned assets, bureaucratic incompetence, and other issues that plagued many of the post-communist countries in transition.[3] However, the group of dissidents and technocrats espoused the ideals of democracy and a market economy and were keen on implementing them once in public positions. They shared "a broad consensus about westward integration into international political, military and economic structures."[4] This pro-western and pro-integration consensus was crucial to the defining of the goals of the foreign and security policies of the Czech Republic and to the country's success in complying with NATO and EU conditionality.

The following subsection briefly summarizes the careers of several former dissidents and technocrats who greatly influenced the Czech Republic's transition to democracy and a market economy. This subsection does not try to provide a description of all such individuals, as that is beyond the scope of this dissertation; rather, it aims only to illustrate that the Czech political scene included individuals who upheld western ideals and were eager to implement them from their public posts.[5]

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[3] For a detailed discussion of political and economic issues in the Czech Republic, see Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, especially Chapter VII.

[4] Karen Henderson, "Transformation in the Czech and Slovak Republics: Elite Perceptions and Responses," in *Governance Structures in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Herman W. Hoen (Groningen, the Netherlands: CESS, 2000), 101, http://www.cess.org/publications/harmoniepapers/pdfs/Harm.Pap.spec.Hoen.pdf (accessed January 17, 2008).

[5] For more information on the presence of former dissidents and technocrats in the Czech government in the early 1990s, see Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, especially Chapter 3.

Václav Havel, leader of the Czechoslovak dissident movement, became the key figure of the Czechoslovak and, later, Czech political scenes. He served as the first post-Communist President and held the Czech Presidency for two consecutive terms between February 1993 and February 2003. Havel, who had been the principal author of the "Charter 77" manifesto and the "Several Sentences" petition and had been imprisoned several times for his activities by the Communist regime, was very clear about his vision of Czech integration into the western community. He served as the moral beacon of the Czech Republic and advocated the country's becoming a member of both the EU and NATO.

Jiří Dientsbier, a signatory of "Charter 77," served as the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs (1989–1992). He became a politician and led the Free Democrats party from 1993 to 1996. Petr Pithart, who left the Czechoslovak Communist Party following the events of the Prague Spring and signed "Charter 77," served as the Czech prime minister (1990–1992), as a member of the Czech Senate (1996–2004), and as the Chairman of the Senate for six years.[6]

Alexandr Vondra signed both the "Charter 77" manifesto and the petition "Several Sentences." Vondra was an adamant supporter of Czech integration into the western institutions, and he advocated moves for such integration from the various posts he had held. He served as foreign policy advisor to President Václav Havel (1990–1992). As First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (1992–1997), he was instrumental in opening

[6] Petr Pithart, "Životopis" [Resume], http://www.pithart.cz/zivotopis.pp (accessed March 2, 2008).

the talks on the accession of the Czech Republic to NATO. He subsequently served as the Czech Ambassador to the United States (1997–2001).[7]

Václav Klaus succeeded in becoming the key technocrat and the leader of the Czech economic transformation from a state-planned economy to a market economy. He influenced Czech politics and the debate on NATO and EU enlargement from several positions, namely, the founder and leader of one of the major Czech political parties, the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Czechoslovak Prime Minister (July– December 1992), Czech Prime Minister (1993–1997), and President of the Czech Republic (March 2003–present).

Josef Zieleniec is an economist by trade. During the communist era, he worked at the Institute of Research in Engineering Technology and Economics Research and at the Institute of Economics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Science. He was the co-founder of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and acted as the party's Vice Chairman until 1997. He served as the minister of foreign affairs of Czechoslovakia (1992) and of the Czech Republic (1996–2000). Zieleniec was elected to the Senate in 2000, where he was a member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security, dealing primarily with the issues of European integration.[8]

Individuals such as those listed above represented the core of the Czech foreign and security policy apparatus. It was a relatively small group of people, since the communist experience was damaging to the elite. However, members of this group had the vision and the background necessary to drive the process of the Czech Republic's

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[7] Government of the Czech Republic, "Dr. Alexandr Vondra," http://www.vlada.cz/en/vlada/clenove/vondra.html (accessed March 2, 2008). Vondra was appointed as Czech Vice Prime Minister for European Affairs in January 2007.

[8] Josef Zieleniec, "Životopis" [Resume], http://www.zieleniec.eu/index.php?dok=0072 (accessed February 19, 2008).

post-communist transformation. As a result of the policies of the communist regime, civil society was very weak and lacked experts in the spheres of foreign policy, security, and defense matters. Therefore, it was this group of elites that defined the Czech Republic's goal of becoming a member of the EU and NATO and shaped the national debate on the issue of membership. This debate included both normative and interest-based arguments regarding membership in the two institutions, arguments which are discussed in greater detail in the next two sections of this chapter. The Czech leadership was successful in achieving a consensus on NATO and EU accession across the most of the political spectrum, which facilitated the country's compliance with membership conditionality.

This consensus had already emerged in 1991, when Czechoslovakia was still a unified state, and it carried over to the Czech Republic. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter III, the Czech leadership determined that the alternatives to EU and NATO membership—namely neutrality, bilateral frameworks, regional cooperation in the form of the Visegrad group, and collective security under the auspices of the CSCE—would be sub-optimal. The definitive break with the other foreign and security policy options and the announcement of the Czech Republic's desire to enter the EU and NATO came very shortly after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. In April 1993, Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec presented to the parliament the first official foreign policy document—the "Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic." Zieleniec announced that even though the Czech Republic would continue to engage in activities in support of political and economic stability in Europe, the activities of the country in this area were not to "slow down the fulfillment of its main goal, which is membership in the European

Community, in NATO, and the WEU."[9] Consequently, the Czech Republic would "refuse further institutionalization of the Visegrad group as well as any effort to create parallel integrative structures other than the European Community and NATO." The ultimate goal would be "gradual engagement with and membership in primary European economic, political, and security organizations"—the EU, NATO, and the WEU.[10] The CSCE was also rejected as an alternative to NATO and the EU. According to the Concept, the Czech Republic would use the CSCE as "a forum for an exchange of information, explanation of its positions, and recommendation and defense of its interests."[11]

The Concept also stressed the important place the United States held in Czech foreign policy, seeing "the military, political, and economic presence of the United States in Europe as a significant contribution to the stability of the entire continent."[12] From the security and defense perspective, the Concept stressed the importance of NATO as the only realistic option. The Concept declared the country's aim to be the defense of the democratic principles espoused by NATO and its intention to become a full-fledged member of NATO.

Foreign Minister Zieleniec also argued that the aim of integration into the Euro Atlantic institutions was a matter of time rather than principle, stressing the idea of belonging: "...it is utterly natural that we will become a part of Europe and the European integration structures someday. It is not a question of what we have to offer. We simply

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[9] Josef Zieleniec in Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1993 – 1996, "Stenoprotokoly: 8. schůze, 21. dubna 1993" [Stenographs: Meeting no. 8, 21 April 1993], Joint Czech-Slovak Digital Parliamentary Library, http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1993ps/stenprot/008schuz/s008019.htm http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1996ps/stenprot/024schuz/24-1.html#8 (accessed February 15, 2008).
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.

belong there, just like we used to belong there for centuries."[13] This position came to characterize the Czech Republic's approach to EU and NATO enlargement and continued to reappear in official proclamations.

The program declarations of successive governments confirmed and developed upon the policy goal of the country's membership in the EU and NATO. The 1996 declaration of the second Klaus government, dominated by Klaus's Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and in power from June 1996 to December 1997, when it fell apart as a result of internal instability and corruption scandals, specified the integration of the country into the "European and world structures and institutions," with a quick entry into the EU and NATO being the main priorities. This was based on the government's position that "the Czech Republic belongs historically, politically, culturally, and economically to the Euro Atlantic civilization and is linked to it through common values that we want to not only share but also develop, protect, and defend."[14]

The transitional government of Josef Tošovský, which was formed in December 1997 with the aim of taking the country to early elections in June 1998, committed itself to achieving the ratification of the Czech accession to the Washington Treaty by the parliament and adopting the standards of NATO necessary to achieve membership. It also declared that it would prepare the necessary documents for accession negotiations with the EU.[15]

The August 1998 declaration of the newly elected government led by Miloš Zeman and his Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) stated that membership of the

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[13] Ibid.
[14] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, 1996," http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=26625 (accessed February 15, 2008).
[15] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, 1998," http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=26606 (accessed February 15, 2008).

Czech Republic in the EU and NATO, together with friendly relations with its neighbors, would be the priority of the country's foreign policy.[16] Following the 2002 elections and the victory of the Social Democrats, the country continued the course established by its predecessors. EU membership was the priority designated by the 2002 declaration of the Vladimír Špidla government in the sphere of foreign policy. The government pledged it would make every effort to successfully conclude the accession negotiations with the EU and obtain the most favorable terms possible for the Czech Republic. It also bound itself to communicating with the public regarding issues stemming from the EU accession.[17]

The section above provides the background for the argument centered on the existence of consensus regarding the country's integration into the EU and NATO at the elite and governmental levels. While there were differences in the NATO and EU accession experiences, the consensus prevailed throughout the process. The sections that follow will shed more light on the policymaking of the Czech leadership in response to the membership conditions of the two institutions and the roles of interests and norms in the debates preceding accession to the two institutions.

NATO ACCESSION

This section analyzes the elite-driven process of the Czech Republic's accession to NATO. It describes the emergence of bipartisan consensus on the part of the mainstream Czech political parties and argues that this consensus was crucial for the implementation of policies governed by NATO conditionality in the domestic sphere. It

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[16] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, August 1998," http://www.mzv.cz/wwwo/mzv/default.asp?id=11446&ido=8806&idj=1 (accessed February 15, 2008).

[17] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, 2002," http://www.mzv.cz/servis/soubor.asp?id=3192 (accessed February 15, 2008).

also asserts that the July 1997 Madrid Summit, where NATO issued the invitation for membership to the Czech Republic, as well as Poland and Hungary, was the key point in the process of compliance with NATO conditionality. The prospect of membership forced the Czech leaders to increase their efforts to reform the military and to implement the legislative and institutional measures necessary for NATO. The period 1997–1999 also marked an attempt to conduct a public debate on NATO membership that had been lacking prior to the Madrid Summit.

This section is divided into three parts. The first part describes the emergence of an elite consensus regarding the desirability of Czech accession to NATO. The second section provides a detailed analysis of the debates on NATO membership on the elite level, particularly in the Czech Parliament. This is contrasted in the third section with the lack of interest that the public generally showed toward NATO membership. The last section offers a discussion of the influence of NATO conditionality on Czech policymaking in the defense sector, arguing that the 1997 invitation to join NATO sped up implementation of necessary reforms.

Elite Attitudes toward NATO Membership

As stated above, the Czech elite consistently demonstrated a consensus regarding the country's accession to the Alliance. This consensus was based on a normative compatibility with NATO's values, as well as the aim of ensuring the country's security. The themes of norms and interest were present in national debates and declarations intended for international audiences, namely NATO decision-makers and member states'

dignitaries. The debates, then, regularly contained a mix of norm-based and interest-based arguments.

The parliamentary debate on NATO membership took place in the spring of 1998. Even before then, all parties had assumed clear positions on NATO membership. All the political parties that formed the successive coalitions in the period 1993–1999 were pro-membership. The Civic Democratic Party (ODS), which was the majority coalition party between 1992 and 1997, supported NATO membership. Its elections program for the 1996 parliamentary elections stressed its commitment to bringing the country into NATO in order to strengthen the country's security and sovereignty. It also emphasized the need to complete the political and military reforms in accordance with NATO standards.[18] Its coalition partners—the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) and the Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL)—were also strong proponents of NATO membership. ODA advocated NATO membership as a means of fostering closer relations with the United States and encouraging the US presence in Europe, and the Christian Democrats emphasized the benefit of the transformative effect of NATO membership on the Czech military. The new party that emerged prior to the 1998 elections, the Freedom Union (US), was also for NATO membership, designating membership as its "primary objective."[19]

The Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), which was in opposition in the period 1993–1997 and subsequently led the government in the period 1998–2002, was also in favor of NATO membership. However, they qualified their support with a demand for a

[18] ODS, "Volebni program ODS 1996: Svoboda a prosperita" [ODS Election Program 1996: Liberty and Prosperity], http://www.ods.cz/volby/programy/1996.php (accessed February 14, 2008).
[19] Unie Svobody, "Volební program Unie svobody 1998" [1998 Election Program of the Freedom Union], http://www.magnetpro.cz/www/unie.cz/downloads/pgm_PS_98.doc (accessed February 14, 2008).

public debate on NATO enlargement and a public referendum on accession.[20] The coalition parties criticized ČSSD as being obstructionist and resisted a referendum, arguing that they had a mandate to pursue accession because they had specified their positions on NATO membership in their electoral platforms.[21] The Social Democrats dropped their demands for a referendum in February 1998 during a preliminary parliamentary vote on a measure approving the country's bid for membership, thus removing the largest obstacle to full ratification.[22]

The extreme right, represented by the Republican Party (SPR-RSČ), and the left, represented by the Communist Party (KSČM), were against NATO membership. However, neither offered any feasible alternatives to the integration option. The Communist Party was discredited in the eyes of the majority of the population because of its past, namely, its disastrous economic planning and acquiescence in the Soviet invasion of 1968. The Republican Party was too marginal to matter. Both parties used demagogic rhetoric, referring to NATO as an "imperialist pact, threatening the independence and prosperity of the Czech people" (KSČM) and as a "tool of American hegemony in Europe" (SPR-RSČ). Both parties also displayed strong anti-German tendencies, warning against German domination of the country through integration.[23] In short, despite the opposition of the Communist and Republican parties, the discussion on NATO accession was dominated by the mainstream democratic parties, leading to a sense of *fait accompli.*

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[20] ČSSD, "Volební program: Alternativa pro naši zemi" [Election Program: The Alternative for our Country] (March 15, 1997), http://www.polhist.hu/pdf/csehek/Alternativa.pdf (accessed February 14, 2008).
[21] Radek Khol, "Czech Republic: A Pan-European Perspective," in *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates*, ed. Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 156.
[22] Art Chimes, "Correspondent Report Number 2-226648" (February 12, 1998), http://www.fas.org/man/nato/news/1998/980212a_voa.htm (accessed February 17, 2008).
[23] Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 54.

NATO Accession Debate

The election programs of the respective parties were an important part of the Czech debate on NATO accession. Moreover, the period between 1993 and 1999 was marked by statements by key Czech politicians regarding NATO enlargement that were meant for both domestic and international audiences. The international aspect of the debate was especially prominent prior to the July 1997 Madrid summit when the Czech leadership was very active in persuading NATO member states of the necessity and benefits of enlargement. Following the NATO membership invitation issued at the Madrid summit, the national aspect of the debate became more pronounced. This debate culminated in the parliamentary debate on accession to NATO, which took place between February and April 1998. The vote in the Chamber of Deputies took place on April 15 and in the Senate on April 30, 1998.

The parliamentary debate and the larger debate that preceded it centered on two sets of issues. The first set was ideological and philosophical in nature, focusing on issues of culture, identity, democracy, and sovereignty. The other set of issues was interest-oriented and concerned the benefits of membership for national security, as well as the economy, technology, infrastructure, emergency planning, and national prestige. The majority of the positions adopted by the leaders combined both normative and interest-based arguments, but the most frequently cited arguments in favor of membership concerned the security aspects of membership and NATO's role as the guarantor of national security and sovereignty. Many speakers referred to the county's most difficult historical experiences, namely, Munich 1938 and the 1968 Soviet invasion, as well as current threats to security.

Before discussing the domestic-level debate, this section summarizes the international dimension of the Czech elites' support for the country's membership, as the ideas presented to NATO and the member states abroad were also deployed on the home front. This discussion serves to illustrate the intricate nature of the arguments, which featured both normative and rational aspects. The use of normative arguments by the Czech and other Central and Eastern European leaders to encourage NATO to establish a consensus on enlargement is especially interesting. This instrumentalization of a normative argument, which is referred to as "rhetorical action" in the literature, was employed by the Czech policy-makers to advance the Czech bid for NATO membership on the domestic as well as international level.[24]

To illustrate, Czech President Václav Havel used both a normative and an interest-driven argument while calling for NATO's expansion at the June 1996 NATO Workshop in Warsaw, Poland. He argued that the defense of the Western democratic community was the central idea behind the creation of NATO, with the Soviet threat being a secondary dimension. He claimed that "the Alliance has a chance to become exactly what the Washington Treaty meant it to be—an open Alliance of all democratic countries in the Euro-Atlantic region, protecting its area and its shared values. This central concept is not to be changed; it is to be infused with new life."[25] Havel also pointed out the rising danger of regional conflicts and called upon NATO to "restate itself as the principal guarantor of internal stability and peace in the Euro-Atlantic region."[26]

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[24] For a detailed discussion on "rhetorical action," see Schimmelfennig, "NATO's Enlargement to the East."
[25] Václav Havel, "NATO: The Safeguard of Stability and Peace in the Euro-Atlantic Region," XIIIth NATO Workshop, Warsaw, Poland, 19-23 June 1996, http://www.csdr.org/96Book/Havel.htm (accessed February 7, 2008).
[26] Ibid.

Václav Klaus stated the following regarding the Czech desire to join NATO during his September 1996 visit to the United States: "We have the feeling that we belong to NATO—just as fifty years of communism prevented us from being one of the founding fathers of NATO and the European Community as well. So we hope that the moment of our entry is approaching...because we definitely don't want to be just close to Europe."[27]

Jaromír Novotný, the Chief of the Foreign Affairs Directorate, touched upon the issue of democratization in Central and Eastern Europe and NATO's role in the process in his June 1994 article in the *NATO Review* magazine: "Cooperation between the post-communist countries and the Alliance helps to guarantee the democratic character of current changes in Europe."[28] Similarly, Alexander Vondra, the then First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, pointed out that the 1949 Washington Treaty contained provisions for "the need to safeguard freedom, common heritage, and Western civilization," along with the aim of ensuring peace and stability in the North Atlantic area.[29]

Alexandr Vondra presented a similar argument at the June 1995 NATO Workshop in Dresden, Germany. Vondra reaffirmed the Czech desire to join NATO by declaring it the country's "priority goal" and setting forth the following rationale for NATO's enlargement:

> The Czech Republic believes it should be enlarged because, in the past, NATO has justified itself as an organization that can guarantee transatlantic bonds; because NATO does not and never shall lose its purpose (despite the current absence of a clearly defined enemy); because NATO protects only its members

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[27] U.S. Department of State, "Remarks by Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Czech Republic Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus prior to their Meeting," September 30, 1996, http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us_96/dos960930.htm (accessed February 15, 2008).
[28] Jaromír Novotný, "The Czech Republic an Active Partner with NATO," *NATO Review* 3, no. 42 (June 1994), http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1994/9403-3.htm (accessed February 7, 2008).
[29] Alexandr Vondra, "The New NATO: Why and How? A Czech View," XIIth NATO Workshop, Dresden, Germany, 18-22 June 1995, http://www.csdr.org/95Book/Vondra.htm (accessed February 10, 2008).

> from external threat; because the Czech people want to share in the responsibility for safeguarding stability and security in the transatlantic area; because we advocate the same values and are willing to defend them; because we are convinced that it is more effective and cheaper to guarantee security in cooperation with others; and because, having learned a lesson from history, we regard the stabilization of Central Europe as the task of our time, and as the precondition for stability in all of Europe. [30]

In this statement, Vondra managed to touch upon most of the main points of the domestic ratification debate, namely, values, common identity and history; security benefits and presence of U.S. guarantees; and the cost-effectiveness of Alliances.

The debate on enlargement reached the highest level of intensity during the vote on ratification in the parliament, i.e. the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, in early 1998. During these debates, the consensus on the part of the mainstream democratic political parties was clearly demonstrated. The Communist Party and the extreme-right Republican Party represented the opposition to NATO membership. They rejected the notion that there was a security vacuum that, according to the proponents, threatened the stability of Europe. Moreover, they warned against the danger of NATO limiting state sovereignty. They agued NATO membership would force the Czech Republic to participate in conflicts in which it would have no direct interest. The possibility of casualties and deployment of nuclear weapons on the Czech territory were brought up by both Communists and the Republican Party. They even suggested that Russia might target the Czech Republic if it joined NATO.[31] As a result, the two parties proposed neutrality and a stronger role for the OSCE in European security.[32] They were also

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998 [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998], Joint Czech-Slovak Digital Parliamentary Library, http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1996ps/stenprot/024schuz/24-1.html#8 (accessed February 13, 2008).

[32] Miroslav Vacek (KSČM) in Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies],

critical of what they perceived as "ungraspable Russophobia" and accused the United States and Germany of trying to "solidify their rule in Europe" through NATO's expansion.[33] Finally, the Communist and Republican representatives stressed the negative impact of the costs associated with membership on other areas of Czech society, namely, education and health care.[34]

Deputy Josef Krejsa summarized the position of the Republican Party in the following way during the debate in the Chamber of Deputies:

> We do not want [to enter] into NATO because the Czech Republic does not [and will not] have...any potential military enemy, ...the accession will mean the limitation of national sovereignty,... we do not want nuclear weapons to be placed in our country,...we reject foreign troops in our country,... we reject for NATO bureaucrats and soldiers to be deciding our affairs based on well-proven "about us without us,"...we will not be able to leave NATO,...we still do not know how much the entry into NATO will cost us.[35]

Representatives from the mainstream parties addressed all of these issues in their speeches in support of NATO membership both in the Chamber of Deputies and in the Senate. Their arguments can be divided into those related to norms and values, such as culture, identity, democracy, and sovereignty, and those concerned with national interest, namely, security guaranteed by the United States as the most powerful member of the Alliance, cost-effectiveness stemming from collective burden-sharing, and access to new technology.

February 11, 1998], Joint Czech-Slovak Digital Parliamentary Library, http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1996ps/stenprot/020schuz/s020176.htm (accessed February 13, 2008).

[33] Václav Frank, (KSČM) in Ibid.

[34] Zdeněk Klanica (KSČM) in Ibid.

[35] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].

Culture and Identity

The issues of national identity and culture discussed in the domestic debate involved the concept of a "return to Europe," which had been advanced by the elites since the fall of the Communist regime. Many members of the Czech elites made claims regarding the idea that the Czech nation belonged to Western civilization. The speeches by Prime Minister Tošovský, Foreign Minister Jaroslav Šedivý, and Senator Michael Žantovský, among others, during the parliamentary ratification debates emphasized the idea of belonging to Western civilization and the need to overcome the divisions in Europe.[36] Prime Minister Josef Tošovský stressed the normative objectives of NATO membership, referring to "our feeling of belonging to the European civilization." He also referred to the democratic aspects of NATO, where all states have a say, which "strengthens the sovereignty of each member state."[37]

The Deputy Prime Minister Josef Lux from the Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL) stressed the importance of the values encompassed by the Washington Treaty. According to Lux, these values were "the most important reason why we should become members of this community, of this grouping."[38] Deputy Vilém Holáň from the Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL) stated that NATO membership was based on "shared values...and widening of the area of stability and democracy."[39]

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[36] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998], April 30, 1998, http://www.senat.cz/xqw/webdav/pssenat/original/4973/4973 (accessed February 13, 2008).
[37] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].
[38] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[39] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].

Jiří Payne, Deputy for the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) emphasized the importance of being a part of the North Atlantic Council to ensure history would not repeat itself. Alluding to Munich 1938, Payne argued the following: "We will gain the opportunity to overcome our main risk, that is, when someone negotiates about us without us."[40] Defense Minister Michal Lobkowicz saw the invitation to join NATO as "a clear signal" that the Czech Republic had returned "to the family of countries upholding the values of individual freedom, democracy, market economy, and the rule of law.[41]

Democracy and Sovereignty

NATO was also seen as a means to strengthen democracy in the Czech Republic.[42] The Alliance represented democracy and the rule of law, and membership in it was seen as recognition of the Czech Republic's advancement in these areas. Proponents considered NATO membership necessary for the strengthening of democratic institutions and supporting the advancement of a market economy. Deputy Pavel Bratinka from the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) stressed the democratic aspect of NATO, stating NATO members were those countries "where democracy is considered the best type of governance, where the rule of law...is considered the ideal type of power...and where the human dignity is the principle starting point."[43]

Petr Pithart, the then Chairman of the Czech Senate, referred to NATO as "a community that not only tolerates but fosters plurality and creates favorable conditions

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[40] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[41] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].
[42] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998], see especially Žantovský and Sobotka.
[43] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].

for multicultural coexistence of people..." He also stressed NATO's "commitment to protect and foster democracy as the internal condition for domestic peace and peace between states and peoples."[44]

According to Senator Milan Špaček (KDU-ČSL), NATO membership would mean "firm anchoring of our country in a community of states for whom democracy, personal freedom and rule of law are not empty notions..."[45] Similarly, Senator Jitka Seitlová from ODA called NATO membership "the confirmation of the democratic path" of the Czech Republic. Senator Jiří Pospíšil from the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) argued that NATO membership created "indirect, yet permanent pressure toward democracy and deepening of democracy."[46]

The democracy issue was closely related to sovereignty in the debate. Those opposing membership argued that membership in NATO would limit national sovereignty, since the country would not be an equal member because of its small size, insufficient capabilities, and geopolitical unimportance. The proponents of membership responded by pointing out that the principle of equality was based on the "one country one vote" formula, ensuring that the voice of the Czech Republic would be heard and the Alliance would not be able to make decisions contrary to Czech national interest. Moreover, they argued that cooperation with other allies would strengthen national sovereignty in times of crisis, as more resources and options would be available to the country.

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[44] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998].
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.

Reacting to the claim that the sovereignty of the Czech Republic would be weakened, Defense Minister Michal Lobkowicz argued that Czech sovereignty "will be, on the contrary, strengthened and solidified by our entry into NATO. That is determined by the nature of the decision-making process in the Alliance."[47] According to Šedivý, "NATO membership strengthens the stability of the democracies and predictability of their international behavior, since the governments are constantly confronted with the opinions of other members and the allied solidarity corrects the extremes in the actions of the members."[48] In his speech to the Senate, Šedivý reiterated the idea of the democratic nature of NATO, whereby "the position of both the small and the big [countries] gives them all an equal opportunity to engage in decision-making. That significantly lowers the risk of the renationalization of defense, or, in other words—the Alliance cannot be used for great power politics by any of its partners."[49]

Security

The security aspects of NATO membership were the crucial part of the debate on the Czech Republic's security policy. In the early and mid-1990s, the security situation was often conceived of in terms of a security or power vacuum between Germany and Russia, and the majority of the Czech leaders came to the conclusion that the only way to fill this vacuum and to prevent the country from becoming the center of a European conflict was for NATO to enlarge into Central and Eastern Europe. The importance of

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[47] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].
[48] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[49] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998].

NATO as a guarantor of Czech security was stressed by numerous Czech leaders on various occasions. For example, Václav Havel made the following argument in a 1995 interview:

> For reasons of security, being accepted into NATO is indeed more urgent for us than being accepted into the European Union. No-one knows what the further development in Russia will be like and whether we will not experience unpleasant surprises there. Now time is really ripe to seriously negotiate about our membership in NATO; it alone offers a security guarantee. Integration in the European Union remains a long-term process.[50]

During the ratification debates, proponents of NATO membership made various arguments regarding Czech security, namely, the country's limits with respect to security self-sufficiency, NATO's success during the Cold War and its ability to function as a security guarantor against Russia and potential conflicts in Europe, NATO's positive role in pressing for reform of the Czech armed forces, and NATO's function as a stabilizer for the Central and Eastern European region. Arguments for membership often centered on the issue of new threats, the country's inability to deal with these threats as a result of its small size and lack of resources, and the suboptimal nature of alternatives to NATO membership. Prime Minister Josef Tošovský made the argument for the need to ensure national security, arguing that the Czech Republic would not be able to fulfill such a task on its own in light of the threats, namely, weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, terrorism, mass migration, failing states, etc.[51] According to Tošovský, NATO

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[50] Martin A. Smith, "The NATO Factor: A Spanner in the Works of EU and WEU Enlargement?," in *Back to Europe: Central and Eastern Europe and the European Union*, ed. Karen Henderson (London; Philadelphia: UCL Press, 1999), 62.

[51] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].

represented "the most effective way for long-term guarantee of external security of our state."[52]

Deputy Vilém Holáň from the Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL) discussed the lack of alternatives to NATO: "NATO is today the only proven international defense organization in the world. We consider NATO the basis of the security architecture of the continent."[53] He cited the unpredictable threats, such as ethnic and religious conflict, mass migration caused by violence and extreme poverty, and weapons proliferation as the grounds for choosing the cooperative security approach offered by NATO. He also stated no other organization could replace NATO, pointing out that the OSCE "does not have the preconditions to become the key overarching organization of an all-European security system."[54] Similarly, Defense Minister Michal Lobkowicz stated NATO was "the only Alliance able to guarantee its members security."[55]

Jaroslav Šedivý cited NATO's engagement in the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an example of NATO's roles and capabilities. According to Šedivý, the Alliance has proved its "ability to defend the freedom and security of its members, defend the values on which it is founded."[56] Even though the likelihood of a large-scale military confrontation had decreased, "security threats are more numerous, more diffused, more diverse. They can come from various geographical areas. National security is now defined not only as the ability to face a military attack, but also nonmilitary threats." According to Jaroslav Šedivý, the Alliance "has at its disposal

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[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[55] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].
[56] Ibid.

structures to avert military and nonmilitary threats."[57] When speaking in the Senate, Jaroslav Šedivý made a similar argument, stating that "NATO is the only organization in the Euro Atlantic sphere that enables the fulfillment of strategic Czech interests... It is primarily in the interest of our own security, which is indivisible from that of our allies."[58]

Miloš Zeman, Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies and the leader of the Social Democratic Party, argued against neutrality, citing historical examples of neutrality being violated. He also criticized the idea that collective security could be achieved through the WEU or OSCE, stating that the WEU "is not militarily capable and cannot, therefore, act in crisis situations." The OSCE, by the same token, "is a system of preventive diplomacy, for consultation." As for the idea that the lack of a current threat argued against the need for NATO membership, Zeman argued that this set of circumstances in fact represented the ideal time to enter into an alliance, since "it is too late to enter an alliance under the pressure of immediate threat."[59]

Senator Michael Žantovský pointed to the Czech Republic's small size and limited resources as well as its proximity to Russia and argued that the country would not be able to defend itself in the event of a large-scale conflict. NATO membership would then mean "a guarantee of the inviolability of state borders, security... No realistic alternative exists to this concept of security."[60]

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[57] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[58] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998].
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

Senator Zdeněk Vojíř from the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) called membership in NATO "the most advantageous means for ensuring the security of the Republic and the security in Europe."[61] Senator Milan Špaček, senator for the Christian Democratic Union (KDU-ČSL) advocated NATO membership as "one of the basic pillars of the stability of our state, not only from an international, external perspective but also from an internal perspective."[62]

US Guarantee

The importance of being in an alliance with the United States and having security guaranteed by America's unrivaled military capabilities was also highlighted in the discussions. The 1998 election program of the Civic Democratic Party cited the need for the "permanent presence" of the United States in Europe through NATO.[63] Similarly, Alexandr Vondra, the then First Vice Minister, stressed the importance of gaining the protection of the United States on numerous occasions. In his speech at the 1995 NATO Workshop, Vondra referred to NATO as "the guarantor of transatlantic bonds".[64] In his 1996 speech at the same venue, Vondra argued that "NATO is the guarantee of a U.S. presence in Europe, which, from a Central European perspective, is still greatly needed."[65] Václav Havel referred to the U.S. presence in Europe in the framework of

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[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] ODS, "Hlavu vzhůru: Volební program ODS" [Head up: ODS Election Program] (1998), http://www.ods.cz/docs/programy/program_1998.pdf (accessed February 14, 2008), 15.
[64] Vondra, "The New NATO."
[65] Alexandr Vondra, "NATO and the Future Security of Central Europe: A Czech Perspective," XIIIth NATO Workshop, Warsaw, Poland, 19-23 June 1996, http://www.csdr.org/96Book/Vondra.htm (accessed February 7, 2008).

NATO as "one of the most important guarantees of our democratic development."[66] Vilém Holáň was one of several deputies who stressed the importance of the transatlantic bond and the presence of the United States in Europe during the debates in the parliament.[67]

Costs

The NATO accession debate also addressed the issue of the costs of membership. The opponents of NATO membership argued that the expenses associated with compliance with NATO conditionality, integration into the NATO systems, modernization, and procurement were taking away from the needs of economic transformation and spending on social programs. The advocates of NATO membership argued that collective defense was the best long-term option for modernization and security from a cost perspective. They also cited indirect economic benefits in the form of technology transfers and links to foreign research and development efforts.

Miloš Zeman argued the following regarding the costs: "...as a former economist, I am able to calculate costs and benefits and I know that the costs of neutrality are two to three times higher than comparable expenses of membership in a system of collective defense."[68] Defense Minister Michal Lobkowicz called the costs of membership "manageable." He also pointed out that the investments in the military would have to be undertaken even if the Czech Republic were not entering NATO: "The modernization of

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[66] Václav Havel in The White House Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by President Clinton and President Havel of the Czech Republic" (September 16, 1998), http://clinton4.nara.gov/WH/New/html/19980916-10221.html (accessed February 18, 2008).
[67] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[68] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].

our army is not an investment in our entry into NATO. It is an investment in our own security." He described NATO membership as "an important motivation, an important engine, a stimulus" for the Czech military.[69] When addressing the Senate, Lobkowicz argued that national financial contributions would be amply rewarded by greater security. The country would also profit from various NATO-led projects, namely, the building of infrastructure. NATO membership is "the most certain and finally cheapest alternative for the preservation of our national independence, our sovereignty, and our security."[70]

Foreign Minister Šedivý also argued that collective security was cheaper than individual security. Furthermore, he claimed NATO membership would serve as a "stimulus for acceleration of ... the transformation efforts and reforms of the armed forces."[71] Senator Richard Falbr made it clear that those costs would be high. However, he also argued that it would be cheaper than neutrality and other alternatives to the Alliance, and that there was "no other alternative" and no other "structure capable of action."[72]

Other Benefits

The advocates of NATO membership also pointed out several other benefits that would, according to the leadership, materialize once membership was achieved. These included economic benefits stemming from the increased attractiveness of the country to foreign investors, access to technology and information, access to NATO's emergency

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[69] Ibid.
[70] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998].
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.

capacity, and increased prestige in the eyes of other players on the international scene, such as the members of the European Union.

The Deputy Prime Minister Josef Lux from the Christian Democraic Party (KDU-ČSL) was one of the speakers who alluded to the economic benefits of NATO membership. He argued that "foreign investors would have fewer questions once we become members of NATO, in relation to their investment and the security of these investments in the Czech Republic."[73]

Prime Minister Josef Tošovský also highlighted the economic benefits of joining NATO. He argued that NATO membership would enhance the perception of the reliability of the country and thus attract more foreign investment. Tošovský also stated that the Czech defense industry would benefit from cooperation with the defense industries of NATO nations and from participation in scientific and ecological projects.[74]

The issues of military reform and access to technology were debated primarily in the military circles and among a very small group of political leaders and subject matter experts. NATO membership was seen as a guarantee of governmental support for the military's budget, reforms, equipment, and interoperability. The Civic Democratic Party (ODS) emphasized these benefits in its 1998 election program.[75] Experts also envisaged that exposure to the NATO way of doing business would lead to a beneficial change in the Czech military culture.

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[73] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[74] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].
[75] ODS, "Hlavu vzhůru: Volební program ODS" [Head up: ODS Election Program], 15.

Vilém Holáň cited the flow of investment, as well as access to technology and information, as an advantage of NATO membership.[76] Similarly, Senator Milan Špaček pointed to NATO's positive role in the growth of Czech scientific work and university education through the system of scientific committees, educational seminars, exchange of information, and scholarships available through NATO.[77]

Senator Jitka Seitlová from the ODA, pointing to the 1997 floods and the crucial role of the Czech military in dealing with them, drew a link to NATO's experience in this area. She advocated NATO's emergency planning capacity as another "significant contribution toward the security of the civilian population" of the Czech Republic.[78]

Regarding national prestige, Jiří Payne, Deputy for the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) claimed that NATO membership would strengthen "the position of the Czech Republic on the international scene" and enhance the country's "authority in bilateral and multilateral relations."[79] The link between NATO and EU membership, for example, was made by Senator Luděk Zahradníček, who offered the following opinion regarding the issue during the debates in the Senate: "... our entry into NATO, as one of our two most significant political goals, is very closely related to the second of our greatest political goals, which is entry into the EU."[80] The argument that the processes of achieving NATO and EU membership were mutually supportive and complementary was made also by Petr Mooz, the then director of the Security Policy Department at the Ministry of Foreign

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[76] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Pokračování schůze Poslanecké sněmovny" [Continuation of the Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies], February 11, 1998].
[77] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998].
[78] Ibid.
[79] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].
[80] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998], 88.

Affairs.[81] He asserted that the Czech Republic would be in a more favorable position at the outset of EU membership negotiations compared with those countries that had not received an invitation of membership at the 1997 NATO Summit in Madrid.[82] According to Mooz, membership in both organizations was equally important.[83]

The actual ratification debate took place between February 11, 1998, when the first reading of the Washington Treaty took place in the Chamber of Deputies, and April 30, when the Senate voted on accession. According to the Czech Constitution, the Treaty had to be ratified by a simple majority in the Assembly of Deputies, composed of 200 Deputies, and then by a simple majority in the Senate, composed of 81 Senators.[84] Following parliamentary approval, the final ratification of the Washington Treaty lay with the President and the government.

The debate in the Chamber of Deputies was "less dynamic, dominated by long-winded speeches by Communist and far-right Republican deputies opposed to NATO expansion. Deputies from other parties... mainly responded by walking out, leaving the chamber almost deserted for much of the day."[85] Out of the 192 members of parliament that were present, 154 voted for and 28 voted against the Czech Republic's accession to NATO. Those who voted against were members of the Communist Party and the Republican Party.[86]

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[81] Petr Mooz, "Curriculum Vitae," http://www.oenb.at/de/img/cv_mooz_tcm14-44398.pdf (accessed April 9, 2008).
[82] Petr Mooz in Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998], 62.
[83] Ibid., 63-64.
[84] "Constitution of the Czech Republic," http://www.hrad.cz/en/ustava_cr/index.shtml (accessed April 9, 2008).
[85] "Czechs Decide whether to Join Nato," BBC News (April 14, 1998), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/despatches/78438.stm (accessed February 25, 2008).
[86] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1996 – 1998, "Stenozáznamy: Stenografický zápis 24. schůze, 14. dubna 1998" [Stenographs: Stenograph of Meeting no. 24, 14 April 1998].

The Senate debate on April 30 was, on the other hand, dominated by the mainstream and pro-NATO parties. A total of 24 of the 69 senators who were present at the meeting spoke during the debate. All but one speaker argued in favor of accession to NATO. Senator Antonín Petráš, representing the Communist Party, was against membership in NATO, arguing that the security of the Czech Republic was not in danger and that NATO membership might lead to future conflict in Europe and elsewhere.[87] The accession to NATO was approved, with 64 votes for and three against.[88] The short time frame for the debate as well as the conclusiveness of the results, which were well over the simple majority threshold in both chambers of the parliament, confirmed the existence of a broad consensus among the Czech elites. President Havel's signature completed the ratification process on February 26, 1999.[89]

Public Attitudes toward NATO Membership: Absence of a Public Debate

The unity on the part of the Czech elites regarding NATO membership stood in stark contrast to the lukewarm attitude of the Czech public toward the subject in the period prior to accession. The low level of popular support serves, then, as a confirmation of the central role played by the Czech leadership in the process of the Czech Republic becoming a member of the Alliance, a process where "the governing elite were...more enthusiastic about NATO membership than the public" and where "[N]either the public nor the media proved to be the driving force in the field of foreign policy or civil-military

[87] Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, "Stenozáznam z 2. dne 3. schůze 1998" [Stenograph from the Second Day of the Third Meeting of 1998], 84.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Radek Khol, "Czech Republic: A Pan-European Perspective," 157.

relations."[90] This argument is strengthened by the fact that the ratification process on enlargement took place in the parliament rather than through a popular referendum.

Polls conducted in the period prior to the Czech Republic's membership in NATO showed a consistently low level of support. The results improved in 1998, which coincided with the Czech government launching an information campaign on NATO. Nevertheless, even the most positive results did not cross the threshold of 60% and generally oscillated between 57% and 59%. The ratio of those who viewed NATO membership as the best solution for ensuring national security followed the same pattern (60% in September 1998). At the same time, the public expected that NATO membership would increase the risk of the country becoming involved in a military conflict.[91]

Several factors contributed to the low level of public interest in and support for NATO as well as the Czech military and national defense. The two main explanations center on the historical experience of the modern Czech nation and the lack of a public information campaign regarding the NATO accession. Additional explanations entail an introverted attitude concentrating on economic well-being, a general lack of interest in foreign policy, and an isolationist attitude stemming from the "feeling of smallness, insecurity, and weakness."[92]

In regard to the "expression of historical experience," the Czech public was aware of the great failures in allied relations, namely, Munich and the Prague Spring. [93] As a

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[90] Štefan Sarvaš, "The NATO Enlargement Debate in the Media and Civil-Military Relations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," *European Security* 9.1 (Spring 2000): 125.
[91] Jan Herzmann et al., "Vnímání problematiky bezpečnostní politiky českou veřejností" [Perception of the Issue of Security Policy by the Czech Public], Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and STEM (2005): 5-8.
[92] Ibid., 4, 16.
[93] Jiří Česal et al., "Návrh komunikační strategie ČR pro oblast bezpečnostní a vojenské politiky" [Proposal for the Communication Strategy of the Czech Republic for the Field of Security and Military Policy],

result, the Czech population was apprehensive about entering yet another alliance and risking becoming "the object of foreign interests."[94] To illustrate, according to a 1999 statistical survey, only 34% of the population perceived NATO as a guarantor of national sovereignty, while 45% saw it as a form of foreign domination; 21% indicated they did not know whether NATO was a guarantor of sovereignty or a form of foreign domination.[95]

These numbers stood in contrast to those in similar surveys conducted by the other two new NATO members, Hungary and Poland. The Czech public displayed the lowest level of support for NATO membership out of the three countries in 1999 (Poland – 60%; Hungary – 61%; Czech Republic – 49%). The number of Czech respondents who indicated they were against membership was twice as high as in Poland and Hungary.[96] Moreover, the number of Czechs who believed that NATO membership would improve the country's security was the lowest (55% in Poland versus 42% in the Czech Republic). Czech respondents expressing fear that their membership in NATO would increase the possibility of their country's involvement in an armed conflict were more numerous than their Polish counterparts (27% in Poland versus 36% in the Czech Republic).[97]

The lack of a country-wide information campaign also contributed to the population's low level of interest in the issue, as evidenced by the high percentage in the "don't know" category. The absence of a national debate on NATO was criticized both

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (2004): 7, http://www.mzv.cz/servis/soubor.asp?id=24152 (accessed March 12, 2008).

[94] Ibid., 8.

[95] Jan Červenka, "Občané o členství ČR v NATO" [Citizens about the Membership of the Czech Republic in NATO], IVVM (November 18, 2002), http://www.cvvm.cas.cz/upl/zpravy/100135s_pm21118.pdf (accessed February 19, 2008).

[96] "The Poles, Czechs and Hungarians on NATO Membership," *Polish Public Opinion* (February 2000), 1, http://www.cbos.pl/PL/Opinia/2000/02_2000.pdf (accessed February 21, 2008).

[97] Ibid.

on the domestic level and on the international level, with NATO representatives and Czech experts and journalists pointing out the absence of a meaningful public debate. Moreover, as mentioned above, the Social Democrats advocated greater public debate and demanded a referendum on the question of NATO membership. The international reaction was also negative, as illustrated by President Clinton calling the Czech public support for NATO of only 42.8% "not helpful," following a December 1997 poll.[98] Moreover, Javier Solana, the then Secretary General of NATO, brought up the topic of the Czech public opinion on NATO when he met with Prime Minister Klaus in April 1997.[99]

Despite the criticism, the government continued to disregard the low level of public interest in and awareness of the issue of NATO enlargement and to ignore the opposition's calls for a greater information campaign and a referendum. Václav Klaus, for instance, argued that the information was available to those who were interested in the issue and that those individuals were "sufficiently educated." He, therefore, did not see any necessity for the government to supply any more pro-NATO arguments.[100] In a similar vein, Foreign Minister Zieleniec stated in an interview that "[T]he duty of responsible government is to provide information. I do not think, that the government has

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[98] Jane Perlez, "New Poll Finds Czechs' Support for NATO Stays Below 50%," *The New York Times*, December 23, 1997, http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F01E1DD123EF930A15751C1A961958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=print (accessed February 19, 2008).

[99] "Historie vztahů mezi Českou republikou a NATO 1985 – 2002" [History of Relations between the Czech Republic and NATO 1985-2002], *Natoaktual.cz Newsletter* http://www.natoaktual.cz/na_cr.asp?y=na_cr/cravztahysnato.htm (accessed December 12, 2007).

[100] Václav Klaus quoted in Margriet Drent, David Greenwood, Sander Huisman, and Peter Volten, *Organizing National Defences for NATO Membership: The Unexamined Domension of Aspiratnts' Readiness for Entry* (Groningen, the Netherlands: CESS, 2000), 101, 127, http://www.cess.org/publications/harmoniepapers/pdfs/harmoniepaper-15.pdf (accessed January 17, 2008).

a duty to pull a propaganda stunt concerning our entry to NATO."[101] President Havel joined those opposing a referendum. He argued a referendum was not necessary because membership did not require constitutional changes and because there was a lack of a precedent, since no other country (except for Spain) had administered a referendum on accession.[102]

Thus, even though the Ministry of Defense approved a communication strategy in 1997 and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the leadership of Minister Jaroslav Šedivý, supported an information campaign, the information campaign was inadequate. The Madrid Summit and the announcement of NATO enlargement, combined with the fall of the Klaus government, however, led to a change of attitude on the part of the Czech leadership. The Tošovský government launched an information campaign in 1998 in an effort to avoid complications in the ratification by NATO allies, many of whom criticized the failure of the Czech leadership to educate the public. The official campaign was especially lively in the first four months of 1998, prior to the ratification in parliament in April of that year.

The Czech media provided "informative programs whose quality varied."[103] For example, the private TV station Nova put together a series in which famous Czech personalities advocated NATO membership. These personal testimonials "focused on affecting the emotions of people rather than providing any sound information." The Czech state-owned TV station broadcasted a twenty-episode series partly sponsored by the Ministry of Defense that discussed the most controversial issues, such as the costs, the

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[101] Josef Zieleniec quoted in Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 58.
[102] Havel quoted in "Historie vztahů mezi Českou republikou a NATO 1985 – 2002" [History of Relations between the Czech Republic and NATO 1985-2002].
[103] Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 59.

impact of enlargement on state sovereignty, and the stationing of foreign troops and nuclear weapons on Czech soil.

Nongovernmental organizations and members of academia also became involved in educating the public on NATO. The Czech Atlantic Commission was the primary NGO involved in the public debates. Founded in 1993, it supported the Czech accession to NATO by various means, such as public discussions and various types of publications.[104] In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this NGO also organized "Days of NATO," which consisted of education programs for teachers, university and high school students, and local public officials.[105]

The information campaign had only a limited effect, and it "remained far behind expectations in terms of being a sufficient tool" for generating large-scale public support for membership in NATO.[106] The debates and information campaign subsided following the successful ratification in the parliament in April 1998 and the June 1998 parliamentary elections, which were won by the Social Democrats, who had by then abandoned the idea of a referendum.[107]

Compliance with NATO Conditionality: The 1997 Madrid Summit and Accession

Despite the consensus on the part of the Czech elites, as evidenced by the decisive vote in favor of accession in the Czech Parliament in April 1998, the Czech leaders were

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[104] Pavel Bílek, "Česká republika plnoprávným členem Severoatlantické alliance - role České atlantické komise a celého nevládního neziskového sektoru" [Czech Republic as the Full-fledged Member of the North Atlantic Alliance – The Role of the Czech Atlantic Committee and the Entire Nonprofit Sector], in *Česká republika po vstupu do NATO* [Czech Republic after the Entry into NATO], ed. Dobroslav Matějka (Prague: Institute of International Relations, 2000), http://www.mzv.cz/wwwo/mzv/default.asp?id=6249&ido=6705&idj=1&amb=1 (accessed March 4, 2008).
[105] Radek Khol, "Czech Republic: A Pan-European Perspective," 158.
[106] Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 2.
[107] Khol, "Czech Republic: A Pan-European Perspective," 158-9.

not consistent in their implementation of compliance with NATO conditions for membership on the domestic level. On one hand, the country's leadership was successful in establishing the civilian control of the military and initiating reforms aimed at the reduction and professionalization of the forces. On the other hand, overall progress relating to the fulfillment of the technical conditions and conditions connected to the formulating of a defense policy, the establishing of institutions and the legal framework for civilian control of the military, and the reforming of the armed forces was, due to the government's poorly coordinated efforts, insufficient at the time of the Madrid Summit. The 1997 Madrid Summit and the expectation of full membership served as the necessary impetus for the implementation of the policies needed to fulfill the conditions of NATO membership. And so the Czech policy makers moved from rhetoric to action, fulfilling NATO conditionality.

The lack of progress in the areas of policy and reform, which is described in greater detail below, was contrasted with Prague's enthusiastic participation in the cooperation frameworks launched by the Alliance prior to enlargement, as well as the military missions under the command of the UN, NATO, and the EU. The Czech Republic became a member of the NACC on January 1, 1993 and a PfP Partner in March 1994. In May 1994, as one of the first new partners, Prague submitted its "Presentation Document" to NATO, which contained concrete priorities for long-term cooperation with NATO.[108] Moreover, the documents stressed the goal of NATO membership.[109] The

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[108] Presentation Document is submitted by partner countries to NATO. It outlines the activities in which the partner country wants to be involved. Based on the Presentation Documents, NATO and the partners then develop a Partnership Programme for implementing these activities.

[109] Radek Khol, "Česká bezpečnostní politika 1993-2004" [Czech Security Policy 1993-2004], in *Zahraniční politika České republiky 1993-2004: Úspěchy, problémy a perspektivy* [Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic 1993-2004: Successes, Issues, and Perspectives], ed. Otto Pick and Vladimír Handl (Prague: Institute of International Relations, 2004), 33.

Czech leaders viewed the PfP as an ideal means for learning and for demonstrating the country's eagerness to become a full-fledged member. It was perceived as "test of maturity for the novices seeking eventual membership.[110]

Through the PfP, the Czech Republic worked at solidifying the democratic changes, including the democratic control of the military, as well as the practical aspects of reform of the armed forces aimed at the adoption of NATO standards and procedures and integration into NATO military structures. Czech decision-makers saw the PfP both as the guarantor of democracy in Europe and as a vehicle for the implementation of NATO standards.[111] The PfP also led to an active engagement with NATO in the form of participation in joint exercises, defense planning, and the NATO-led operation in Bosnia. To illustrate, Czech troops participated in 210 military exercises in 1994–1998, with 85 exercises taking place on Czech territory.[112] All these activities were aimed at proving to the member states that the Czech Republic was ready and eager to become a valuable member of the Alliance.

The Czech Republic also participated in international military operations led by the UN, the EU and NATO. The country participated in UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) operations in the former Yugoslavia between 1992 and 1995. It also contributed to the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Czech battalion was deployed under the British command. The Czech participation in these operations was motivated not only by the aspiration to contribute to the security of a region to which the Czechs were geographically and culturally close, but also by "a desire to build relations with

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[110] Novotný, "The Czech Republic an Active Partner with NATO."
[111] Ibid.
[112] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 32.

NATO."[113] This aim was achieved, as the participation in the NATO-led operations "immensely stimulated and deepened" relations between Prague and Brussels.[114]

The eagerness to participate in NATO frameworks and operations stood in stark contract to the shortcomings in the efforts to transform the armed forces and create the institutions necessary to ensure progress. Compliance with these aspects of NATO conditionality was hindered by the lack of a long-term vision, political struggles within the ruling coalition, and the absence of communication between ministries and other actors involved in the process. Overall, the Czech military reform was "reactive rather than proactive, characterized by missed opportunity and wasted expenditure, with elements of rationality and order forced on the sector by budgetary constraints and the aspiration to join NATO."[115] The process was also characterized by weak political guidance and the ensuing lack of conceptual and doctrinal guidance.[116] The membership invitation issued at the Madrid Summit in 1997 and the prospect of NATO membership in the near future were "the main driving force" behind the implementation of reforms. The Madrid Summit served as a vehicle for the implementation of NATO conditionality in the areas of democratization, military reform, and the creation of institutional structures to support democratic civil-military relations, as stipulated in the 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement."[117]

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[113] Ibid., 29.
[114] Jiří Šedivý, "Czech-NATO Relations: A Dynamic Process," in *The Emerging New Regional Order in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Tadayuki Hayashi (Sapporo: SRC Hokkaido University, 1997), 139.
[115] Jiří Šedivý, "Czech Military Transformation," *NATO Review* (Spring 2005), http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2005/issue1/english/analysis.html (accessed January 17, 2008).
[116] Ibid.
[117] NATO, "The Study on NATO Enlargement."

Democratic Conditionality

Prague demonstrated steady progress in its compliance with the democratic conditionality of NATO, reflected in the demands for democracy and a market economy, fair treatment of minorities, absence of unresolved disputes with neighboring countries, and commitment to peaceful settlement of disputes. The Czech Republic benefited from the fact that the Alliance considered the political criteria of conditionality more important than the military and technical criteria, which were of "secondary importance" during the first post-Communist enlargement.[118]

The stress placed upon democratic conditionality prior to the July Madrid summit was "a great relief" to the Czech leadership, since that is where the country had made the most progress.[119] By then, the Czech Republic had shown ample evidence of having established a functioning democracy and a market economy. NATO also did not have any major issues with the country's treatment of minorities (though that became a subject of EU discontent). Moreover, the Alliance had very positive views of the Czech Republic's smooth separation from Slovakia and, especially, the country's diplomatic advances in improving relations with Germany, represented by the signing of the "Czech-German Declaration on Mutual Relations and Their Future Development" in January 1997.[120] In short, the Czech Republic did not encounter a major setback on its way to NATO membership in the area of democratic conditionality. The situation was more complex, however, in the sphere of military reform and civil-military relations.

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[118] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 4.
[119] Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy-Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 51-52.
[120] "German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future Development of 21 January 1997," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, http://www.mzv.cz/servis/soubor.asp?id=1873 (accessed February 18, 2008).

Military Reform

The military reform suffered from a lack of planning and a conceptual framework, as well as a shortage of funding in the period prior to the Madrid Summit. Defense transformation was hampered by governments that stressed economic reform over military issues.[121] The parliament was primarily interested in curbing the army's power and enforcing changes in key personnel. As a result of these issues, the transformation of the Czech military was marked by a lack of unity and coordination. To illustrate, former deputy defense Minister Jan Váňa said that "the reform of the armed forces preceded the architecture of the security system, which should have been ready first."[122]

The lack of high-level and comprehensive doctrines in the defense and security sectors had a negative effect on the progress of reforms.[123] The two Klaus governments in the period 1992–1997 did not consider defense issues a priority, instead concentrating on the problems of economic transformation. Thus, despite the ODS's support for accession into NATO, "the party did not actively pursue that security policy until forced to do so after the Madrid summit."[124] Therefore, only very general framework documents were adopted between 1993 and the Madrid Summit, namely, the June 1993 "Concept for the Development of the Army of the Czech Republic by 1996" and the 1995 "White Paper on Defense of the Czech Republic 1995." The Concept concentrated on the improvement of the management of the armed forces and the reduction of manpower and equipment. Even though the Concept specified territorial defense as the priority, it also included

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[121] Alyson J.K. Bailes, "Preface," in *Relics of Cold War*, by Tůma, v.
[122] Miloš Balabán, "Tvorba a realizace bezpečnostní politiky – historická reflexe a současné výzvy" [Formation and Implementation of Security Policy – Historical Reflection and Current Challenges], in *Bezpečnostní politika České republiky – výzvy a problémy* [Security Policy of the Czech Republic – Challenges and Issues] (Prague: Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic – AVIS, 2004), 27.
[123] Dobrovský, "Stručný nástin polistopadového vývoje zahraniční politiky" [Brief Outline of the Post-November Development of Foreign Policy], 48.
[124] Khol, "Czech Republic: A Pan-European Perspective," 156.

"gradual convergence with NATO aimed at achieving compatibility and interoperability in the most important fields."[125] The White Paper reiterated the aims of reducing personnel, as well as supporting professionalization and improved training of personnel. It also outlined a plan for the improvement of command, management, logistics, and interoperability based on NATO standards in order to prepare the Czech army for membership in NATO expected by 2000.[126]

The Madrid Summit marked a turning point in regard to the doctrinal documents when "some eleventh-hour steps were taken to reassure Brussels that preparation for NATO membership was under way, no matter how delayed."[127] In March 1997, the Klaus government finally adopted the long-awaited National Defense Strategy. The document defined the country's defense policy, discussed threats, and addressed the questions of defense planning and resources. It stressed the integration of the Czech Republic into NATO, as well as into the EU and the WEU, and addressed the issue of "adoption of laws, conceptions, and partial strategies...in the area of defence."[128] In March 1997, the government also approved the "Concept of the Build-up of the Army of the Czech Republic until the Year 2000 with a Perspective to the Year 2005." The Concept identified threats to national security and specified steps for the development of the army in areas such as troop number, readiness, and equipment.[129] Prime Minister Klaus admitted that the government adopted these documents as a result of NATO pressure prior to the Madrid Summit.[130]

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[125] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 25.
[126] Ibid., 17.
[127] Tesar, "Security Diplomacy, Policy Making and Planning in Post-Cold War Prague," 55.
[128] Ibid., 55-56.
[129] Ibid., 56.
[130] Khol, "Czech Republic: A Pan-European Perspective," 155.

The doctrinal documents adopted in the spring of 1999 served as further confirmation of NATO conditionality at work. The National Security Strategy and the Military Strategy were approved only a few weeks before the country joined NATO. These documents were the first ones to be developed during the existence of the independent Czech Republic, and they "contributed significantly to a clearer definition of goals and means" in regard to the country's defense and foreign policies.[131] The Military Strategy, approved in March 1999, outlined the main risks to national security and established priorities for the armed forces. Participation in Allied defense was listed as a second priority, after the defense of the Czech Republic. The Strategy stressed the aim of building and training forces allocated for NATO deployment that would be capable of out-of-area operations and interoperable with NATO forces and systems.[132] The government also replaced the 1997 "Concept of the Build-up of the Army" with the "Concept for the Development of the Defense Establishment" in June 1999, as the 1997 Concept failed to properly address the requirements of membership in NATO and to complement the new Security Strategy and the Military Strategy.[133]

The 1997 Madrid Summit also marked an increase in the Czech defense budget and the creation of processes and institutions to improve acquisition. In the early 1990s, the transformation of the Czechoslovak and, later, Czech military suffered from a lack of budgetary means. An aversion to the military, caused by decades of Soviet military occupation and the complicity of the Czechoslovak military, meant that

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[131] Ibid., 35.
[132] "Vojenská strategie České republiky" [Military Strategy of the Czech Republic] (March 29, 1999), *Vojenské rozhledy* no. 3 (1999), http://www.army.cz/avis/vojenske_rozhledy/1999_3/vojstrat.htm (accessed February 29, 2008).
[133] "Vojenská strategie České republiky" [Military Strategy of the Czech Republic]; and "Bezpečnostní strategie České republiky" [Security Strategy of the Czech Republic], *Vojenské rozhledy* no. 2 (1999), http://www.army.cz/avis/vojenske_rozhledy/1999_2/bezpe.htm (accessed February 29, 2008).

"[P]arliamentarians were competing in populist attacks against the budget of the Ministry of Defense."[134] The defense sector saw a 17.7% decline in expenditures in the period 1993–1997, falling from 2.3% of GDP to 1.6% of GDP.[135] This decline was reversed in 1997 when the Czech government approved a gradual increase in the defense budget of about 0.1% annually in order to achieve a defense budget that would amount to about 2% of GDP by 2002. This step was linked to the demands of NATO membership, primarily in the matter of interoperability.[136] Moreover, in 1999, the government approved measures establishing that the expenditures of the Defense Ministry would not fall below 2.2% of national GDP.[137] All parties with the exception of the Communist Party supported the increased defense budget.[138]

The approaching NATO membership also led to reforms of the acquisition system. During the period of pre-membership cooperation with NATO in 1995–1999, it became apparent that the Czech Republic lacked the institutions and structures for effective acquisition, coordination with the defense industry, and harmonization of equipment with NATO. The Czech Republic had one of the lowest rates of cost efficiency in Europe and was warned by NATO that it would not be capable of fulfilling

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[134] Dobrovský, "Stručný nástin polistopadového vývoje zahraniční politiky" [Brief Outline of the Post-November Development of Foreign Policy], 51.
[135] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 39.
[136] Ibid., 38, 40.
[137] Jaroslav Štefec, Josef Procházka, and Vladimír Velčovský, "Ekonomické aspekty bezpečnosti" [Economic Aspects of Security], in *Bezpečnostní politika České republiky – výzvy a problémy* [Security Policy of the Czech Republic – Challenges and Issues] (Prague: Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic – AVIS, 2004), 179. Despite the 1997 decision, the expenditures were lowered to 2% of GDP for the period 2004-2008 in 2003. This cut amounted to nearly CZK 48.5 billion. The cut had a negative impact in many areas, such as decrease of the number of persons designated for operations, decrease in the total number of personnel, or limitations to modernization.
[138] Martin Palouš, "A Czech Perspective on NATO and European Security," The Nixon Center, Washington, D.C., January 22, 1999, http://www.nixoncenter.org/publications/Program%20Briefs/vol5no5czech.htm (accessed February 18, 2008).

the tasks stemming from the Washington Treaty.[139] Moreover, there were cases of corruption in the arms trade[140], public tenders were often not announced, and contracts were simply awarded without a bidding process and oversight.[141] Between 1993 and 1997, only nine acquisitions out of a total of more than 700 were awarded through a public tender. [142] Following criticism from NATO partners, the Czech Republic established the National Armaments Office at the end of 1999 to ensure a high-quality oversight of defense acquisitions, systematize its defense acquisition, and ensure harmonization with NATO.

Civil-Military Relations and Institutional Structure

As with democratic conditionality and military transformation, the prospect of NATO membership served as "a catalyst in the development of civil-military relations. All issues of civil-military relations were linked to the major question of accession."[143] The Czech Republic displayed a relatively stable political environment and adopted the legal provisions necessary to govern civil-military relations. However, it lacked a clear division of authority between the political leadership and the military, represented by the General Staff. As the Madrid Summit was approaching, the leadership, represented primarily by the Minister of Defense, concentrated on depoliticizing the military and establishing civilian control. Depoliticization had occurred in the early 1990s, through a

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[139] Štefec, Procházka, and Velčovský, "Ekonomické aspekty bezpečnosti" [Economic Aspects of Security], 182.
[140] Ibid. For details on the Czech arms exports, see Filip Pospíšil, "Korupce v oblasti obchodu se zbranemi" [Corruption in the Area of Arms Trade], Transparency International 2004, http://www.transparency.cz/pdf/zbrane_cz_w.pdf (accessed February 22, 2008).
[141] Štefec, Procházka, and Velčovský, "Ekonomické aspekty bezpečnosti" [Economic Aspects of Security], 182-183.
[142] Šedivý, "Czech Military Transformation."
[143] Sarvaš, "The NATO Enlargement Debate in the Media and Civil-Military Relations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," 115.

screening process during which individuals deemed politically compromised, i.e. those who either had been or were members of the Communist Party, were removed. The Ministry of Defense also initiated a structural reform of the armed forces. It was necessary to decrease the size of the army and to deal with the fact that the army's structure was bloated. Moreover, its hardware was becoming obsolete, and the new hardware was becoming increasingly expensive. [144]

However, these reforms were slowed down by the lack, particularly in parliament, of civilian experts on defense matters. Until 1997, the Ministry and the General Staff were "the only executive institutions involved in forming Czech defense policy and strategy," which means that the military commanders had "considerable freedom in decision making."[145] Lack of enthusiasm for reform on the part of the General Staff, combined with the perpetual changes in the post of defense minister—the Czech Republic had five defense ministers in the six years between its foundation and its accession to NATO—resulted in a defense reform that was "a stop-start process, characterized by perpetual improvisation."[146] To illustrate the slow pace of reforms prior to the Madrid Summit, the Ministry of Defense had over 80,000 employees, of which 24,000 were civilians, in 1997. This number was 25,000 more than that stipulated in the 1993 reform concept.[147]

In 1997, institutions were finally created with the aim of improving civil-military relations and interaction with NATO. In June, the Klaus government created the Committee of the Czech Republic for Integration in NATO. The purpose of the

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[144] Rašek, "Nelehká přeměna armády" [The Uneasy Transformation of the Army], 12.
[145] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 8-9.
[146] Šedivý, "Czech Military Transformation."
[147] Ibid.

Committee was to coordinate the practical aspects of membership and to improve coordination between the government and NATO. The Committee was involved in the accession talks with the Alliance in the fall of 1997. The government also created the National Security Agency, whose task was to develop policies for the protection of classified information, an area where the Czech Republic was lacking.

In May 1998, "prompted by the country's impending admission to NATO," the government created the National Security Council.[148] The Council, headed by the prime minister, filled the void in the civilian control of defense and security matters that had existed since 1993 and became the driving force behind the reform of the armed forces. The Council first met on June 29, 1998, and it addressed all the necessary strategic doctrines of the Czech foreign policy.[149]

NATO conditionality also had a major effect on the adoption of new laws related to the military. Prior to 1998, the military had found itself in a state of "legislative vacuum", where essential laws were simply missing.[150] In May 1998, the Tošovský government adopted the Constitutional Law on the Security of the Czech Republic, based on which the government created the National Security Council. The legislature also approved the Protection of Classified Information Act (Law No. 148/1998) in May 1998 as part of the Czech Republic's entry into NATO.[151] This law was an important step

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[148] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 9.
[149] Khol, 34; see also Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, "Report on the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic 1998-1999," http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00002565/01/Report_on_the_Foreign_Policy_of_the_Czech_Republic_1998.pdf (accessed February 25, 2008).
[150] Jaroslav Vítek, Bezpečnostní komunita a tvorba bezpečnostní politiky [Security Community and the Creation of Security Policy], in *Bezpečnostní politika České republiky – výzvy a problémy* [Security Policy of the Czech Republic – Challenges and Issues] (Prague: Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic – AVIS, 2004), 141.
[151] National Security Office, "Act No. 148/1998 on Protection of Classified Information," http://www.nbu.cz/en/act148.php (accessed February 28, 2008).

toward satisfying the demands of the NATO membership, as the inadequate protection of classified information had been one of the major problems for the country. Adoption of these laws "heralded a systematic shift in the MOD's personnel policy and was an important step in the professionalization process." The new laws resulted in a reformed staff management "compatible with that of the Czech Republic's NATO allies."[152] Adoption of domestic legislation to allow for membership in NATO continued in 1999, with the Ministry of Defense serving as the main coordinator. In September 1999, the Zeman government adopted eight laws on defense matters in "[P]reparations for the responsibilities of NATO membership and participation in NATO activities."[153] These laws included, for example, the Act on Professional Military Personnel, which established a standard career path for military personnel, defined obligations and rights in regard to the performance evaluations, reorganized performance evaluations, and outlined economic and social benefits. In other words, these laws brought much needed changes to the military service. Finally, the Czech Parliament approved measures permitting the sending of Czech forces abroad and the receiving of foreign forces on Czech territory.[154]

It took the country six years to create "a basic conceptual, legal, institutional and procedural framework" for civil-military relations and defense reform. During this process, the "prospect of NATO membership [was] the main driving force."[155] According to the 1999 report of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "the minimum NATO requirements were met only with a considerable effort by the day of the Czech Republic's

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[152] Tůma, *Relics of Cold War*, 25.
[153] Ibid., 25. Full text of laws available at http://www.mvcr.cz/sbirka/1999/sb076-99.pdf (accessed March 9, 2008).
[154] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, "Report on the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic 1998-1999."
[155] Šedivý, "Czech Military Transformation."

accession to NATO and in some cases to a less than satisfactory degree."[156] The prospect of NATO membership provided a necessary focus and direction for the Czech policy-makers in transforming the Czech armed forces, creating policies, and implementing a legal framework. The ratification process led to a public debate and an information campaign. The positive pressure of NATO membership was a decisive factor in the process of the Czech Republic's defense transformation. NATO conditionality served, then, to overcome the occasionally lackadaisical approach of the Czech leadership regarding the requirements of compliance.

CONCLUSION

NATO membership represented the culmination of the efforts of all Czech governments since the inception of the independent Czech state. Joining NATO, together with membership in the EU, was a key element of the plan to ensure the security of the country, prevent the repetition of the traumas of the Nazi and Soviet occupations, and solidify the changes in the international system in order to avoid crisis situations similar to those of 1938, 1948, and 1968. Entry into NATO was motivated chiefly by structural concerns, and compliance with NATO conditionality was driven primarily by interest and instrumental action.[157]

The interest-driven arguments were supported by ideas. The Czech leaders portrayed the Alliance as a protector of Western civilization, defined by shared history,

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[156] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, "Report on the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic 1998-1999."

[157] Petr Mooz, "Vliv členství ČR v NATO a v EU na bezpečnostní politiku České republiky [Influence of membership in NATO and in the EU on the Security Policy of the Czech Republic], in *Bezpečnostní politika České republiky – výzvy a problémy* [Security Policy of the Czech Republic – Challenges and Issues] (Prague: Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic – AVIS, 2004), 60.

culture, and norms. The Czech Republic saw itself as a member of this civilization, having contributed to its creation over the centuries. In other words, a set of normative and ideational factors influenced the process of compliance. The Czech leaders set out to rebuild the Czech national identity by linking it to the past, namely, the experience of interwar Czechoslovakia (and, even further in the past, the Bohemian Kingdom), and to a present and future wherein NATO membership was the institutional representation of the norms that formed the historic basis of the Czech identity. These ideas were used to advance interest-based arguments, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter VII.

The 1999 NATO bombing campaign in the former Yugoslavia is a primary example of the gap between normative rhetoric and action. The NATO campaign showed very clearly that membership would be a much more complex matter than the preparations for accession, and it also revealed limits to the Czech internalization of norms. The fierce debates among the Czech elites over the campaign and about whether and to what extent the Czech Republic should support it made other NATO members question the Czech Republic's loyalty to the Alliance. Securing at least a minimal level of support across the political spectrum and from the public for the Allied operations and Czech participation in them necessitated much effort on the part of those officials who strove to ensure that the country's membership in the Alliance would not be put in jeopardy.

CHAPTER V

THE CZECH ACCESSION TO THE EU

The 2004 enlargement of the European Union was an unprecedented event in the history of the institution. On May 1, 2004, the EU grew by ten new members, eight of which were post-communist countries. The process leading up to the enlargement was a complex one, characterized by adjustments on the part of both the EU and the applicants. The EU had to prepare its structure to accept the new members without bringing its functioning to a halt. The candidates had to implement a series of steps to prepare themselves for membership. These steps, defined within the 1993 Copenhagen Criteria, contained provisions concerning democracy, market economy, and institutional structures. Considering the sheer magnitude of the tasks that lay ahead of the new democracies, it is truly remarkable that an enlargement of such scale and complexity took place less than 15 years after the fall of the iron curtain.

The EU enlargement process was characterized by a great asymmetry between the EU and the applicant countries, with the EU setting the conditions and the timetable of enlargement. Nevertheless, the process of compliance on the part of the applicants was not automatic, and it did not derive solely from the demands of the EU. Domestic-level consensus on the desirability of membership was the most important prerequisite for compliance. Leadership in the applicant countries was the critical variable in translating the EU demands into domestic policy adjustments. As the discussion below shows, the Czech leaders facilitated compliance with EU conditionality primarily as a result of their identification with Europe and the West. While the Czech EU debate was characterized

by a relatively high level of Euroscepticism, accession was viewed as a *fait accompli*. The debate was not about whether or not to join but about the potential positive and negative impact of membership.

THE 2004 EU ENLARGEMENT

Before moving on to the actual case study, we will describe the process timeline of the 2004 enlargement in order to illustrate its complex nature. The process of accession aimed at ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Copenhagen Criteria. It was constituted of the pre-accession strategy, screening, and the actual negotiations. The pre-accession strategy focused on the specific needs of the individual candidates as they were getting ready for accession. It included, for example, financial assistance through various programs.[1] Screening took place before the accession negotiations were initiated. It was directed by the European Commission, and its main purpose was to explain the *acquis*, i.e. the entire body of EU legislation, to the applicant countries via a series of multilateral and bilateral meetings and to evaluate the applicants' willingness and ability to apply the *acquis* in their domestic settings. Moreover, the screening exercise helped identify potentially problematic issues. Negotiations represented the last stage of the accession process. The negotiations took place in the context of an intergovernmental

[1] The Phare program (Pologne, Hongrie Assistance à la Reconstruction Economique) was created in 1989 to assist Poland and Hungary, but it grew to cover other central and Eastern European countries; see European Commission, "Phare," http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financial-assistance/phare/index_en.htm (accessed August 12, 2008). ISPA, the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession, was established in 1999 to "address environmental and transport infrastructure priorities identified in the Accession Partnerships with the 10 applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe;" see European Commission, "Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA)," http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/ispa/ispa_en.htm (accessed August 12, 2008). SAPARD, the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture & Rural Development, was established in 1999 in an effort to assist countries of Central and Eastern Europe in addressing the problems of the structural adjustment in their agricultural sectors and rural areas and in implementing the *acquis communautaire* concerning the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy); see European Commission, "Agriculture and Enlargement," http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/external/enlarge/back/index_en.htm (accessed August 12, 2008).

conference, where the conditions under which the candidates would adopt, implement, and enforce the *acquis* were debated. The European Commission conducted both the screening and the actual negotiations, and also provided the so-called annual Regular Reports, the detailed assessments of each of the candidate's progress in fulfilling the requirements of the *acquis*, to the Council.

The main actors on the candidate level included governmental and ministerial representatives and national parliaments.[2] The individual candidates drafted their positions on each of the 31 chapters of the *acquis* and engaged in the negotiations with the member states through a Chief Negotiator. The national parliaments of both the member states and the candidate countries were part of the accession process, as they had to ratify the Accession Treaty, following the assent of the European Parliament and approval by the Council. The ratification process also included domestic referenda in some countries.

As mentioned before, the Copenhagen European Council (June 21–22, 1993) specified the conditions to be met by the applicants in the Copenhagen Criteria, with the fulfillment of the democratic criteria being deemed a prerequisite for the start of negotiations.[3] The Essen European Council (December 9–10, 1994) established a "pre-accession" strategy to help the Central and Eastern European countries adopt the *acquis*.[4]

At the June 1997 Amsterdam European Council, the EU published *Agenda 2000*, which included a proposal for EU reforms that would have to be carried out prior to

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[2] "The European Parliament in the Enlargement Process – An Overview" (March 2003): 6-7, http://www.europarl.eu.int/enlargement_new/positionep/pdf/ep_role_en.pdf (accessed May 25, 2007).
[3] European Council, "European Council in Copenhagen 21-22 June 1993 - Conclusions of the Presidency."
[4] European Council, "European Council Meeting on 9 and 10 December 1994 in Essen: Presidency Conclusions," http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00300-1.EN4.htm (accessed January 29, 2007).

enlargement.[5] In accordance with *Agenda 2000*, the Commission proposed opening negotiations with those candidates deemed to have satisfied the democratic criteria of membership and achieved progress with regard to economic conditions and the capacity to adopt the *acquis* – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia, as well as Cyprus. Negotiations with the first wave of applicant countries, known as the "Luxembourg Group," opened in Brussels on March 30, 1998 following a decision taken at the December 1997 Luxembourg Council.[6] The 1999 Kosovo crisis raised geopolitical concerns that prompted the EU to open negotiations with all 12 applicants, including Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, and Malta (but excluding Turkey). The negotiation stage concluded at the Copenhagen Summit on December 13, 2002. On February 19, the European Commission delivered a favorable opinion on the accession to the European Union of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.[7] Following national ratification procedures, the EU enlargement occurred on May 1, 2004.

As this brief survey demonstrates, the accession process was a demanding one, and it required effort and dedication on the part of all parties involved. It was extremely challenging for the applicants, as they often lacked the expertise and resources necessary for such a vast project, especially at the beginning. Nevertheless, the combination of the EU "stick and carrot" approach and the hard work on the part of the governments and

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[5] European Council, "European Council, Amsterdam, 16 June 1997," http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/032a0006.htm (accessed January 29, 2007).
[6] European Council, "Presidency Conclusions - Luxembourg European Council, 12-13 December 1997."
[7] European Commission, "Commission Opinion of 19 February 2003 on the Applications for Accession to the European Union by the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic," European Navigator, http://www.ena.lu/ (accessed March 18, 2008).

administrations of the candidate countries resulted in the first post-Cold War enlargement of the EU.

EU ACCESSION

As with the Czech Republic's accession to NATO, the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU was an elite-driven process, characterized by a broad-level consensus regarding the desirability of EU membership on the part of the successive Czech governments and main political parties. Even though Euroscepticism was present among the Czech leaders, namely in the person of Václav Klaus and his Civic Democratic Party (ODS), it was not directed toward the principle of EU membership as such but rather toward the future direction of the EU in terms of the "deepening" of its institutions and the potentially adverse effect on state sovereignty of such a development.

The process of EU accession included several milestones that served to encourage the Czech compliance with EU conditionality. These milestones were represented, primarily, by the issuance of the Copenhagen Criteria by the EU in June 1993 and the EU decision, made at the December 1997 Luxemburg Summit, to start negotiations on membership in March 1998. As a result of these events, the question of the country's membership moved from the realm of *if* to the realms of *when* and *how*. The prospective Czech governments then proceeded, at varying paces, to define and defend, primarily within the framework of accession negotiations, the terms under which membership would be achieved.

The Regular Reports of the European Commission, issued in the period 1997-2000, played an especially important role in the achievement of compliance. These

annual reports were critical of the country's inability to implement the Copenhagen Criteria, particularly in the areas of institutional and legal reform, bank privatization, and the status of the Roma minority. They served as an impetus for the government to improve communication and coordination in order to implement the necessary reforms. In this respect, the 1999 report was of particular importance, as will be discussed below.

The public referendum on enlargement, which took place in the Czech Republic on June 13 and 14, 2003, was the final milestone prior to the actual accession. Unlike the case of the Czech accession to NATO, a referendum was necessary, since accession to the European Union necessitated changes in the Czech constitution.[8] As a result, the Czech leaders had to take public opinion on EU membership seriously. Nevertheless, as with NATO membership, the Czech public remained generally uninterested, as evidenced by low turnout at the poll (55% of the eligible population). The "yes" vote of 77.3 % was, however, relatively high compared with the other candidate countries, and it served as a confirmation of the goal identified by the Czech leaders.

The chapter is structured along the same lines as the chapter on the Czech accession to NATO. It centers on demonstrating the importance of domestic leadership in transferring EU conditionality to the domestic setting and on discussing the presence of normative and rationalist arguments in the EU debate. As in the case of the Czech accession to NATO, this chapter analyzes the process of the Czech Republic's accession to the EU in three parts: elite level, public attitude, and specific instances of compliance with EU conditionality. The first section examines positions of the successive governments, key leaders, and political parties toward EU membership and reviews the arguments made by the leadership for and against membership. Unlike in the case of the

[8] The Parliament adopted the constitutional law on national referendum in October 2002.

Czech accession to NATO, where the majority of the debate took place in the parliament, the EU accession debate occurred not only among the leadership, but also between the elites and the public. The debate on EU membership was more complex than that on NATO due to the impact of the EU accession on the domestic level. As with the NATO accession, the Communist Party and the Republican Party were clearly against membership. However, the position of the mainstream parties was more refined than was the case with the NATO accession, with the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) displaying traits of Euroscepticism, in the form of a reluctance to accept the loss of sovereignty arising from the strengthening of EU institutions. Nevertheless, the Eurosceptic elites did not question the ultimate goal of EU membership and regarded it as a *fait accompli*. As with the Czech accession to NATO, the leadership used both norm-driven and interest-driven arguments in the debate, with the rationalist approach being prevalent due to the prescriptive nature of EU conditionality.

It is necessary to analyze the public attitude toward the EU and the country's membership in it because EU membership had to be confirmed by the public in a referendum. The successive Czech governments had to gain public support for their goal of taking the country into the EU. The public debate on EU accession was, therefore, significantly more robust than the NATO accession debate. However, the public support for EU membership was consistently lower than in the majority of the other applicant countries, despite an official information campaign. Regarding both NATO and EU membership, the public played a secondary role to the leaders.

The section addressing the specifics of compliance with institutional conditionality concentrates on those conditions that the country had the most problems

adopting and satisfying in each area of the Copenhagen Criteria, i.e. the democratic, economic, and *acquis* criteria. The Czech Republic experienced difficulties satisfying several conditions, primarily minority rights as related to the Roma and the implementation of the *acquis* in national legislation. As stated above, the reports issued by the European Commission on the progress or lack thereof regarding compliance with the Copenhagen Criteria had a sobering effect on national leadership, whereby the main political parties agreed to cooperate and push through the necessary reforms in the parliament.

Elite Attitudes toward EU Membership and the EU Debate

The following subsections describe the positions of the successive Czech governments toward the country's integration into the EU and review the attitudes of the main elite actors toward the EU, as represented by two key leaders—Václav Havel and Václav Klaus—and the Czech political parties. This section also contains a discussion on Euroscepticism, as it was an important feature of the debate on both the elite and public levels.

Unlike the Czech accession to NATO, where the accession debate was limited to the elite level, the EU accession debate took place on two levels – one among the elites and the other between the leadership and the general public. The two debates were informing each other. Nevertheless, it was the elites who, as with the NATO accession process, ultimately determined the course of the events by implementing policies designed to satisfy the requirements of EU membership. The public played a secondary

role, and the referendum on EU enlargement mainly served to confirm the policy goals of the successive governments. Euroscepticism characterized the discussion on both levels.

What becomes apparent in the discussion that follows is that the debate had two distinct stages. The initial stage, which took place in the first half of the 1990s, was characterized by unqualified support for EU membership as a representation of an almost mythic "return to Europe." President Havel played a key role in this phase, as a result of which the EU was widely accepted as a source of democratization, stability, security, and economic wellbeing by the Czech elites and the population. The second stage of the process was closely linked to prospects of actual accession in the near future and the conditions of membership were evaluated and judged from the perspective of how they might affect the domestic sphere. Václav Klaus was the figure who initiated the discussion related to this phase, which soon entered the realm of political parties and governments. The Czech EU accession debate was, then, a more complex matter than a simple downloading of the EU rules and regulations.

Euroscepticism

Before venturing into the discussion of the top-down nature of conditionality and compliance in the Czech Republic, it is necessary to discuss the concept of Euroscepticism, which characterized the Czech accession to the EU. Euroscepticism, defined as "the idea of contingent or qualified opposition, as well as incorporating outright and unqualified opposition to the process of European integration," existed both on the elite level and among the public.[9] The attitudes of the Czech political parties

[9] Taggart and Szczerbiak, "Contemporary Euroscepticism in the Party Systems of the European Union Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe," 3.

toward EU enlargement as well as the direction of public opinion made the Czech Republic one of the most Eurosceptic countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Several variables can be used to explain this feature of Czech politics, including history, political culture, economic situation, and actions carried out by the EU. Before discussing the specifics of Czech Euroscepticism, we will define the phenomenon from a theoretical perspective.

Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak distinguish between two types of Euroscepticism in Central and Eastern Europe — hard and soft. Hard Euroscepticism is defined as an "outright rejection of the entire project of European political and economic integration, and opposition to one's country joining or remaining a member of the EU."[10] Members of this group disagree with the entire idea of a politically and economically integrated Europe because, in their opinion, it threatens their country's traditional values.

Soft Euroscepticism is a "contingent or qualified opposition to European integration," and it can be divided into "policy Euroscepticism" and "national-interest Euroscepticism."[11] Policy Eurosceptics oppose some or all aspects of deepening of the EU, primarily granting the supranational institutions with further powers and thus limiting the powers of the national capitals. A policy Eurosceptic might also oppose, for example, only his/her country's membership in the European Monetary Union. Policy Euroscepticism is usually issue-specific and emerges in connection with a particular stage of the integration process or domestic debates on a certain issue. In the case of accession negotiations, these issues have the potential to become serious obstacles to the process.

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[10] Ibid., 3.
[11] Ibid., 3.

National-interest Euroscepticism uses rhetoric defending state national interest in the EU debate. The political actors that fall in this group often use national interest rhetoric to increase their support base on the domestic political scene. This approach is not uncommon during accession negotiations on the part of parties in the candidate countries, as many aspects of the *acquis* require the applicant to forgo their national interest in order to fulfill the conditions of a particular chapter, and this often antagonizes parts of the population.

The phenomenon of Euroscepticism was reflected in the application of the Czech Republic for accession to the EU. Prague was second to last in submitting its application for EU membership. It did so on January 17, 1996 (Slovenia submitted its application on June 10).[12] The Czech Republic's application, submitted by the Eurosceptic Prime Minister Václav Klaus, deemed membership in the EU "a step of unparalleled importance in the modern history of the country; a step of high political and economic consequences." However, the memorandum that accompanied the application referred to the EU as a "unique, often not very popular and in some ways still fragile creation" that "has to be supported, strengthened and developed." Nevertheless, the memorandum stated that European integration was inevitable: "...within the context of modern European developments the exchange of a part of its national sovereignty for a shared supranational sovereignty and co-responsibility is an inevitable step." Finally, the Czech Republic proclaimed itself "prepared to participate fully in the continued development and strengthening of the European Union." [13]

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[12] "Application by the Czech Republic for Accession to the European Union (17 January 1996)," European Navigator, http://www.ena.lu/czech_republic_application_accession_european_union_17_january_1996-020401891.html (accessed March 18, 2008).
[13] Ibid.

Czech Governments and EU Accession

In the first half of the 1990s, the Czech Republic was the frontrunner among the post-communist countries in regards to democratic transformation and marketization. The moral stature of President Havel, the progressive economic policies of Prime Minister Václav Klaus, and the generally stable political and social environments made the country a model for the other Central and Eastern European countries. Of note is the fact that by 1996, Klaus, whose Civic Democratic Party (ODS) won the 1992 and the 1996 elections under his leadership, was the only prime minister in Central and Eastern Europe to remain in office for a full four-year term.[14]

Successive governments defined membership in the EU (and NATO) as the primary goal of their foreign policy. Between 1993 and 1996, the Czech government was led by the center-right Civic Democratic Party (ODS) of Prime Minister Václav Klaus, in coalition with the centrist Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL) and the center-right Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA). The government's "Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic," presented to the Czech Parliament on April 21, 1993 by the Czech Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec, designated the country's membership in the EU as "the long-term goal and clear priority." Zieleniec continually pointed out that accession to the EU was a "challenge for our own efforts at home," warning that the process of integration would require hard work, as opposed to the "constant knocking on the door of the European Communities."[15]

Klaus and his government initiated radical reform policies in the economic area, characterized by a neoliberal macroeconomic approach. Klaus, an avid admirer of

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[14] Michael Kraus, "The Czech Republic's First Decade," *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 2 (April 2003): 51.
[15] Parliament of the Czech Republic, Chamber of Deputies 1993 – 1996, "Stenoprotokoly: 8. schůze, 21. dubna 1993" [Stenographs: Meeting no. 8, 21 April 1993].

Britain's Margaret Thatcher, wanted to implement "a market economy without adjectives," whereby the forces of the market and not the government would regulate the economy.[16] He also initiated the overhaul of state ownership by administering voucher privatization. All of these steps were viewed positively by the EU. This economic strategy and the positive feedback received from the West, combined with the country's democratic history in the interwar period, the anti-communist attitude, and a shared border with two EU countries (Germany and Austria), contributed to the creation of the notion of "Czech exceptionalism."[17] This "largely self-serving argument of the Czech political elite" meant that Prague hoped and expected to join the EU before the other post-communist countries.[18] As a result, the Klaus government was unwilling to cooperate with the other Visegrad Group countries on issues related to EU accession for fear of being slowed down by them.

Klaus and his ODS returned to power in the June 1996 elections, securing the continuation of the pro-democratic and pro-transformation trends. The 1996 declaration of the second Klaus government confirmed the goal of EU membership:

> The government understands the membership in the European Union as a logical culmination of the efforts of the Czech Republic to fully integrate among the European democratic countries. The government...intends to intensify and expedite the preparation for our future membership in order for the Czech Republic to be able to start negotiations on membership already in 1998.[19]

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[16] Kraus, "The Czech Republic's First Decade," 52.
[17] Jacques Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately? The Implications of the Czecho-Slovak Divorce for EU Enlargement," in *The Road to the European Union*, ed. Jacques Rupnik and Jan Zielonka (Manchester, UK; New York, NY, USA: Manchester University Press; Palgrave, 2003), 35.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, 1996."

EU membership was advocated based on the idea that the Czech Republic belonged to the Euro Atlantic civilization and the desire to not only share but also develop, protect, and defend "the common values."[20]

Despite the proclamations of the Klaus government, the period of Klaus's premiership was characterized by "Euro-passivity," with Klaus becoming increasingly Eurosceptic. Even though Klaus was pro-integration in the sphere of the economy, he was vocal in his criticism of the EU's influence over national policymaking and national sovereignty. In November 1997, the combination of an economic crisis, a financial scandal of Klaus's ODS, and the disintegration of the coalition caused the fall of the Klaus government. This coincided with the December 1997 decision on the part of the EU to start negotiations with the Czech Republic and other candidates of the "Luxembourg group." The Klaus government was replaced with the caretaker, technocratic, pro-EU government of Josef Tošovský, which led the country until the June 1998 elections. The transitional government of Josef Tošovský committed itself to preparing the documents necessary to start accession negotiations with the EU.[21]

The 1998 elections marked a narrow victory for the Social Democrats (ČSSD), led by Miloš Zeman. The Zeman government's declaration listed membership in the EU as one of its priorities, together with NATO membership and friendly relations with neighboring countries. It stressed the need to "speed up the adaptation of our legislation to the norms of the European Union," to adopt a law on referendum, and to conduct a public information campaign on the Czech accession to the EU (and NATO). At the same time, the government declared that it would protect the Czech national interests: "The

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[20] Ibid.
[21] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, 1998."

government will strive to ensure that the negotiated conditions of accession to the EU reflect the Czech national interests."[22] The efforts of the Zeman minority government were supported by the opposition Civic Democratic Party of Václav Klaus in accordance with the "Opposition Agreement" concluded between the ČSSD and the ODS. This controversial "contract" was designed to ensure the viability of the minority Zeman government, with the ODS pledging not to initiate or support any no-confidence vote in exchange for high-level positions for ODS members in the administration.[23]

The 2002 elections marked the victory, for the second time in a row, of the Social Democrats, under the leadership of their new chairman, Vladimír Špidla. Once again, the ČSSD failed to win enough votes to form a majority government, which forced it to enter into a coalition with the centrist Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL) and the center-right Freedom Union (US), both pro-EU parties. The coalition had a precarious one seat majority in the parliament.[24] The new government continued the course established by its predecessors. EU membership was the priority designated by the 2002 declaration of the Špidla government: "Membership of the Czech Republic in the European Union as the most advanced integrated grouping continues to be the basic priority of the foreign policy of the government."[25] The declaration devoted an entire section (section 9) to the EU project, which discussed the steps necessary to achieve the goal of membership. The government pledged it would make every effort to successfully conclude the accession negotiations with the EU and obtain as terms that were as favorable as possible for the

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[22] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, August 1998."
[23] Kraus, "The Czech Republic's First Decade," esp. 56-57.
[24] Ibid., 50.
[25] Government of the Czech Republic, "Program Declaration of the Government of the Czech Republic, 2002."

Czech Republic. It also bound itself to communicating with the public regarding issues stemming from the EU accession.

It was, then, the two successive Social Democratic governments who carried out the majority of the accession negotiations between 1998 and 2002. Even though the ČSSD-led governments lacked a clear majority, they succeeded in passing the legislation necessary to comply with the *acquis*. Examples of important reforms include privatization of state-owned banks, the creation of the position of an ombudsman,[26] and the creation of regional authorities. The reforms were possible due to the support provided by the other pro-democratic parties, such as the Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL) and, more importantly, the Eurosceptic Civic Democrats (ODS). The failure of the far-right Republican Party to garner enough votes to enter the parliament in the 1998 and 2002 elections, combined with the unspoken rule of not forming coalitions with the unreformed Communist Party (KSČM), meant that the truly anti-EU forces on the Czech political scene were not able to hinder the longstanding goal of the successive post-1989 Czech governments to take the country "back to Europe."

Havel vs. Klaus

The EU debate was influenced, to a large degree, by Václav Havel and Václav Klaus. These two individuals represented the two stages of the Czech debate on EU accession – the norm-driven phase characterized by staunch support for the EU as the vehicle for the "return to Europe, and the interest-driven phase marked by careful

[26] An ombudsman, or the "Public Defender of Rights," deals with disputes between individual citizens and government authorities. The status and powers of the Ombudsman are governed by Law 349/1999 Coll. of 8 December 1999 on the Ombudsman. See Public Defender of Rights, "Law of 8th December 1999 on the Public Defender of Rights," http://www.ochrance.cz/en/ombudsman/zakon.php (accessed April 20, 2008).

analysis of the conditions of membership. Havel, the dissident and intellectual President, represented the normative side of the debate. Klaus, leader of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), Czech Prime Minister, and leading Czech Eurosceptic, represented the rationalist, interest-driven approach, arguing for a careful consideration of both the costs and the benefits of enlargement. The two men represented "two different approaches to politics, two different views of the world, and as a consequence two different, yet representative, attempts at creating authoritative narratives about the Czechs and Europe/the EU."[27]

Havel made his pro-EU stance clear as early as 1990, and continued to advocate his position throughout his entire presidency, which lasted for a decade (February 1993 to February 2003). His position evolved from that of idealistic, wide, pan-Europeanism to the goal of political unity in Europe under the auspices of the EU. The entire time, however, Havel's arguments consistently supported European integration based on the values and norms embodied in the European Union. Havel, the thinker and moral leader respected world-wide, argued that the integration of Europe was a natural and desirable phenomenon that would bring together the shared European culture artificially divided by the Cold War and prevent the repetition of the intra-European violence of World War II. A united Europe, in Havel's mind, was not so much a matter of political advantage as it was a matter of a formal recognition of a civilization and shared culture that the Central and Eastern Europeans had helped create and to which they had the natural right to return.[28]

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[27] Peter Bugge, "Czech Perceptions of EU Membership: Havel vs. Klaus," in *The Road to the European Union: The Czech and Slovak Republics*, ed. Jacques Rupnik and Jan Zielonka (Manchester, UK; New York, NY, USA: Manchester University Press; Palgrave, 2003), 181.
[28] Ibid., 183.

Havel saw the EU as the guarantor of the European civilization and culture and as the means for overcoming both the legacies of the Cold War and the ethnic division of Europe. For Havel, Europe united in the EU was "a common destiny, a common, complex history, common values and a common culture of life..., an area characterized by a certain behaviour, a certain sense of will and responsibility."[29] The following quote from Havel's February 2000 speech to the European Parliament demonstrates his deeply held belief in the indivisibility of Europe:

> The idea that there could forever be two Europes—a democratic, stable and prosperous Europe engaged in integration and a less democratic, less stable and less prosperous Europe—is, in my opinion, totally mistaken. It resembles a belief that one half of a room could be heated and the other half kept unheated at the same time. There is only one Europe, despite its diversity, and any weightier occurrence anywhere in this area will have consequences and repercussions throughout the rest of the continent.[30]

The EU's "civic principle" would provide the needed protection from the dangers of nationalism and ethnic boundaries.[31] In the EU, he saw the guarantee against the undemocratic nationalistic tensions that caused wars in Europe in the past. According to Havel, European integration would have the power "to smother the demons of nationalism... and to enable nations to live in peace, security, freedom and prosperity by foregoing some of their immediate interests in favor of the far greater benefits of realizing their long-term interests."[32]

Havel was critical of those who depicted the EU as a threat to national sovereignty. In his March 1994 speech at the European Parliament, he stated the

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[29] Václav Havel, Speech at the Charlemagne Plenary 1996, Aachen, Federal Republic of Germany, May 15, 1996, http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=3&id=1&kat=1&from=93 (accessed April 15, 2008).
[30] Havel, Address before the Members of the European Parliament, Strasbourg, France, February 16, 2000, http://old.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/2000/1602_uk.html (accessed February 18, 2008).
[31] Havel, Speech at the Charlemagne Plenary 1996, Aachen.
[32] Havel, Speech at the Council of Europe Summit, Vienna, October 8, 1993, http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=3&id=1&kat=1&from=125 (accessed April 15, 2008).

following regarding the notion of the European "superstate" encroaching on the nation state:

> I do not perceive the European Union as a monstrous superstate in which the autonomy of all the various nations, states, ethnic groups, cultures, and regions of Europe would gradually be dissolved. On the contrary, I see it as the systematic creation of a space that allows the autonomous components of Europe to develop freely and in their own way in an environment of lasting security and mutually beneficial cooperation based on principles of democracy, respect for human rights, civil society, and an open market economy.[33]

In the same speech, Havel also presented the rationale for his advocacy of Czech membership in the EU – the notion of long-term future returns:

> Yes, we are able and happy to surrender a portion of our sovereignty in favour of the commonly administered sovereignty of the European Union, because we know it will repay us many times over, as it will all Europeans. The part of the world we live in can hope for a gradual transformation from an arena of eternally warring rulers, powers, nations, social classes and religious doctrines, competing for territories of influence or hegemony, into a forum of down-to-earth dialogue and effective cooperation between all its inhabitants in a commonly shared, commonly administered and commonly cultivated space dedicated to coexistence and solidarity. [34]

Havel also addressed concerns about the loss of sovereignty. In his May 2000 address to the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament, he asserted that, while the country would lose a degree of national sovereignty to the institutions of the EU, it would not lose its identity: "...what we are surrendering, or what we will surrender, is a piece of our sovereignty. However, only we alone could take away our identity; no one in Brussels or anywhere else could deprive us of it."[35] In fact, Havel argued the EU would provide an environment conducive to the fostering of national identity: "It is my

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[33] Havel, Speech at the European Parliament, Strasbourg, March 8, 1994, http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=3&id=1&kat=1&from=115 (accessed April 15, 2008).
[34] Ibid.
[35] The Office of the Czech President, "Address Delivered by Václav Havel, President of the Czech Republic, to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic" (Prague, May 16, 2000), http://old.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/index_uk.html (accessed March 18, 2008).

impression that the European Union is something that can expand the scope for the implementation of our national identity, should we ourselves wish this, but that it alone cannot deprive us of our identity. We can only destroy it ourselves if we should act short-sightedly."[36]

Havel also countered those arguments accusing the Czech Republic of accepting the EU diktat and having to build a large bureaucracy as a result. Havel claimed the adoption of EU laws and regulations would contribute to the "upgrading [of] the political standards in our country, upgrading [of] the fundamental principles of decent co-existence among its citizens and decency in public life." Moreover, he argued that the implementation of EU conditionality and the *acquis* would be done "not merely for the sake of the European Union" but "above all for our own sake." Havel considered the EU conditions beneficial for the transformation of Czech society and for the solidification of democracy and the rule of law. Membership in the EU was to him the only option: "In my opinion, ...there is no other alternative for us than to strive for membership in the European Union, as this is precisely the road which, for a great many reasons, is the best one for us as well."[37]

In short, Havel advocated the Czech Republic's membership in the EU and the EU's widening and deepening processes as steps of great historical and political significance. The integration of the continent under the auspices of the EU went, in Havel's mind, beyond the provisions of a free-trade zone. It was a matter of solidifying the community of values and eliminating the divisions created by past European conflicts

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

by embracing these values and, at the same time, respecting "the independence and identity of various communities, regions, states and nations."[38]

Klaus, on the other hand, was the primary critic of an unqualified support for Czech Republic's membership in the EU on the Czech political scene (apart from members of the Communist Party and the Republican Party). Referred to as a Eurorealist or a Eurosceptic, he rejected the lofty philosophical debates and instead concentrated on the practicalities of the country's accession to the EU, reminding the Czech Republic that it was necessary to discuss both the benefits and the cost of the country's EU membership and the EU's future integration: "Everyone keeps talking about the benefits of enlargement and nobody talks about its costs."[39] Even though Klaus considered integration beneficial from the economic point of view, he had reservations about the implications of Czech membership in the EU in regard to Czech national sovereignty. While Havel described the intra-European struggles in terms of the conflict between the forces of democracy and those of nationalism and authoritarianism, Klaus consistently highlighted the tension between a deepening EU imposing centralization from Brussels and a "multi-speed" EU that would allow for greater national autonomy and individualism.

Klaus's Eurosceptic attitude emerged in the early 1990s, and it solidified in the second half of the decade.[40] He has coined the term "Europeism," which he defines as

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[38] Václav Havel, "An Historical Chance for Our Country - Let Us Not Waste It!," *Mladá fronta Dnes*, March 24, 2001, http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=3&id=4 (accessed April 15, 2008).
[39] Klaus quoted in Marian L. Tupy, "EU Enlargement: Costs, Benefits, and Strategies for Central and Eastern European Countries," *Policy Analysis* no. 489 (September 18, 2003): 4, http://catoinstitute.com/pubs/pas/pa489.pdf (accessed December 29, 2006).
[40] Věra Řiháčková and Christian von Seydlitz, "Václav Klaus and the Constitutional Treaty – Czech Euroscepsis or Eurorealism?," EUROPEUM (June 2007): 1 http://www.europeum.org/doc/pdf/883.pdf (accessed June 28, 2008).

"the dominant ideology of the contemporary Europe."[41] He has spoken and written about the "arrogant authoritativeness" of Europeism and criticized it on multiple levels, namely its broader philosophical underpinnings as well as its approach to the economy, integration, democracy and society, and foreign policy.[42] Klaus's position on the EU is succinctly summarized in the following passage from his address at the Congress of Brussels, delivered on December 5, 2005:

> ...the contemporary European Union is a bureaucracy-driven conglomerate characterized by growing democratic deficit. It is an entity, which has abandoned the initial ambition to eliminate barriers of all kinds. It has as well abandoned the ambition to create democratic, free-market continent-wide space in which the member countries could enjoy freedom and prosperity. Instead, Europe today is characterized by ever-growing regulation of all spheres of life, protectionism, artificial harmonization and unification of everything and gradual dismembering of the sovereignty of the nations. These tendencies represent a serious danger not only for the future of European integration, but also for the relations between the member countries.[43]

Klaus has called the current trends in the EU a "new utopism" and accused the EU-decision makers of seeing themselves as "the chosen ones" who want to "mastermind, plan, regulate, administer the others." He referred to the EU elites as "the people who do not want to go to work from 8am until 5pm during the week and to have a normal job" and "the people who want to steer, command, patronize, and 'legislate' others."[44] His opposition to the steering and the commanding of Brussels went so far that it caused a clash with Hans van den Broek, the then EU Commissioner for Enlargement, at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 1996. Klaus, representing the Czech Republic as the Prime Minister, argued that it was the EU that should change its agriculture policy

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[41] Václav Klaus, "What is Europeism?," in *What is Europeism or What Should Not Be The Future For Europe*, ed. Václav Klaus, Jiří Weigl, Petr Mach, Marek Loužek, and Jiří Brodský (Prague: Center for Economics, 2006), 7, http://www.cepin.cz/docs/dokumenty/europeism.pdf (accessed February 25, 2008).
[42] Ibid., esp. 8-18.
[43] Ibid., 37.
[44] Ibid., 17.

instead of forcing the candidates to adopt the EU standards. Van den Broek reacted by reminding Klaus that "it is not the European Union which wants to join the Czech Republic but the other way around."[45]

Klaus has criticized the EU for using the model of a social-market economy and for over-regulating the market not in the interest of the citizens but for "very narrow private interests (of different interest groups and politicians and bureaucrats who also satisfy their own interests)."[46] Integration and harmonization across the EU leads, in Klaus's words, to increased costs and decreased competitiveness: "The harmonization policy is nothing else but an attempt to export high costs and lowered degree of competitiveness to other EU countries."[47] He has accused the EU elites of striving to sideline national-level decision making and politics under the cloak of supranational post-democracy in an effort to create a system "uncontrollable" by the citizens.[48] Finally, he has expressed this opinion on the undemocratic nature of foreign policy advocated by the Europeists: "Europeists do not like 'domestic policy' (which is being under much stricter democratic control) and therefore promote the — democracy lacking — decision-making at supranational level."[49]

Klaus was especially adamant in his criticism of the EU's affront to national sovereignty. During his premiership between 1993 and 1997, he would often reflect on the issue in the following way: "Shall we let our identity and sovereignty dissolve in Europe like a lump of sugar in a cup of coffee?"[50] He also drew the parallel between the

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[45] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 36.
[46] Klaus, "What is Europeism?," 11.
[47] Ibid., 14.
[48] Ibid., 15.
[49] Václav Klaus, "What is Europeism?," 15.
[50] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 26.

former diktats of Moscow and that of the EU, stating that "We have not escaped from the controls of Moscow's bureaucracy only to replace it by a more civilised version from Brussels."[51] He, therefore, opposed the idea of EU's "parliamentarisation and...federalization" and the introduction of a European Constitution, advocated by Havel in his March 1999 speech at the French Parliament. Klaus reacted, from his position as Speaker of the Czech Parliament, by stating that for reasons of national sovereignty, he was "categorically opposed to the United States of Europe."[52]

Despite Klaus's criticism of some aspects of the EU, he understood the developments in the EU and the Czech Republic's entry into the institution as a *fait accompli*. For example, he stated the following in an interview for *Lidové Noviny*, one of the leading Czech newspapers: "One of the greatest tragedies of this continent is today's empty Europeanness on which a political organisation is built. I consider this to be a fatal mistake. ..., but at the same time know that this process is already so advanced that I do not know what to do about it."[53] Similarly, Klaus's criticism of the single currency was mixed with a sense of resignation. While he considered the European monetary unification "the Trojan horse"[54] of EU harmonization, he accepted the fact that "Euro is here and is here to stay." He warned, however, that keeping the single currency would be costly and would have the potential to create interstate tensions.[55] In short, Klaus came to

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[51] Ibid., 30.
[52] Ibid., 31.
[53] Ibid., 27.
[54] Klaus, "The Future of Euro: A View of A Concerned Outsider," in *What is Europeism or What Should Not Be The Future For Europe*, ed. Václav Klaus, Jiří Weigl, Petr Mach, Marek Loužek, and Jiří Brodský (Prague: Center for Economics, 2006), 32, http://www.cepin.cz/docs/dokumenty/europeism.pdf (accessed February 25, 2008).
[55] Ibid., 34.

the realization that being outside the EU was "much worse" than having to accept some of the negative aspects of membership.[56]

Klaus's resignation in November 1997 from the post of Prime Minister due to the failure of his economic reform as well as allegations of corruption in his party removed the most articulate critic of the EU from the center of the Czech political scene. It also coincided with the December 1997 decision by the EU to open negotiations with the first wave of applicants. The caretaker Tošovský government (November 1997-June 1998) and the Zeman government, elected in June 1998 and led by the pro-EU Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), assumed a pro-EU course.

Klaus continued to develop and advocate his Eurosceptic stance from the position of ODS chairman. However, his party cooperated with the Zeman government very closely within the framework of the Opposition Agreement. The disappointing results of the ODS in the 2002 elections, in which the ODS won 58 seats compared to the 70 seats won by the ČSSD, led to a change of leadership, with Klaus stepping down from the chairmanship in December — only to be elected President of the country in February 2003.[57] Holding the position of President meant that Klaus was supposed to be a neutral figure on the political scene. He scaled down his criticism of the EU, and he was adamant about being one of the Czech signatories to the Athens Treaty of Accession. Nevertheless, he did not entirely relinquish his anti-EU rhetoric. To illustrate, in the months prior to the referendum on enlargement, Klaus referred to the eventual membership as "a marriage of convenience, not a love match," and he criticized the government's public campaign for EU membership as being one-sided and as trivializing

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[56] Tupy, "EU Enlargement: Costs, Benefits, and Strategies," 3.
[57] Kraus, "The Czech Republic's First Decade," 50.

the issue.[58] More importantly, Klaus was the only head of state among the candidate countries not to encourage the public to vote "yes" in the referendum.[59]

The discussion below shows how Klaus's Eurosceptic attitude was reflected, to some degree, both within his Civic Democratic Party, of which he has been an Honorary Chairman since assuming the Czech presidency, and among the population. Nevertheless, the ODS officially endorsed the country's membership in the EU, and the ODS voters voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Czech Republic's membership in the EU.

Political Parties

The EU debate on the level of the political parties also went through two phases. In the early 1990s, all parties, with the exception of the Communist Party (KSČM) and the Republic Party (SPR-RSČ), were enthusiastic about closer integration with the West. However, once the EU opened up negotiations in 1998, the Czech political parties started to adopt more refined positions that reflected a more careful consideration of the various aspects of the process, namely the requirements of the *acquis* and the future of both the EU and the Czech position in the institution. The proponents of the EU membership argued that it would bring significant benefits to the country. They cited the economic growth associated with the elimination of barriers to trade, investment, and free movement of labor; exchange of knowledge, technology, and expertise; improved business transparency and accountability; higher productivity; and cheaper and higher quality consumer goods. The opponents of the country's membership claimed that it

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[58] Sean Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics? The Czech EU Accession Referendum of 13-14 June 2003," in *EU Enlargement and Referendums*, ed. Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart (Routledge: New York, NY, 2005), 147.
[59] Ibid., 155.

would, in fact, fail to provide conditions conducive to economic growth because of the loss of economic liberty and the costs associated with implementing EU regulations in the areas of labor, agriculture, and the environment.[60]

The Czech political parties displayed characteristics of both hard and soft Euroscepticism in the period preceding EU accession. While different authors' estimates of the level of Euroscepticism of certain Czech parties, primarily the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and the Communist Party (KSČM), vary, they all agree that the overall level of party Euroscepticism was high. The Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) was the most pro-EU party, characterized by "almost universal" support within the party.[61] The ČSSD perceived the European integration as being consistent with its own values and the interests of the country. These interests, consistently stressed in the successive election programs as well as the "Euro-manifesto" issued in 2001, included improving the position of the Czech Republic within Europe, securing political and economic advantages for the country and individual citizens, and strengthening democracy.

The 1996 ČSSD election program advocated EU membership in the following way: "It is in the interest of the Czech Republic to as soon as possible become a member of the European Union, which we understand not only as a zone of free trade but also as a multidimensional European community, united by a common social, ecologic, agricultural, transportation, and even foreign and security policy." Furthermore, the ČSSD perceived integration as a positive step that "allows equalization of the living

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[60] For a detailed discussion of the costs associated with EU membership in the areas of labor, agriculture, and the environment, see Tupy, "EU Enlargement: Costs, Benefits, and Strategies for Central and Eastern European Countries," 3.

[61] Sean Hanley, "The Political Context of EU Accession in the Czech Republic," *The Royal Institute of International Affairs* (October 2002): 6, http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/3081_czech.pdf (accessed February 17, 2008).

standards of citizens of all countries of the Union and assures their collective security, social equality and access to education and work opportunities in the territory of all states of the European Union."[62]

The 1998 ČSSD election program, entitled "Alternative for our Country," called for a better and faster process for the Czech Republic's integration into the EU. It criticized Euroscepticism and advocated Czech membership in the EU based on the benefits it would bring to the country:

> Membership in the European Union will provide the Czech Republic with conditions for economic development in peace, with security and stability, and with the strengthening of its status. It will provide the citizens of the Czech Republic with access to education and work opportunities in the territory of all states of the European Union. The Czech Republic will have the opportunity to co-determine the policy of one of the world's largest alliance and, through its own input, co-create the European Union of the 21st century.[63]

The 2001 "Euro-manifesto" and the 2002 election program reiterated the advantages of EU membership. Moreover, they developed the theme of national interest in the context of adopting the *acquis*. The 2002 program and the manifesto stressed that membership would not be accepted at any cost, but would be based on the promotion of "Czech economic and political interests."[64]

The interest-driven aspect of the debate is even more pronounced in the case of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS). The platform of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) was pro-EU, but to a lesser extent than that of the ČSSD. The ODS agreed with the principle of European integration, primarily for economic reasons. However, it did not

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[62] ČSSD, "Volební program České strany sociálně demokratické: 'Lidskost proti sobectví'" [Election Program of the Czech Social Democratic Party: Humanity against Selfishness] (1996): 22, http://www.cssd.cz/dokumenty/archiv/volebni-programy/1996.pdf (accessed February 14, 2008).
[63] ČSSD, "Volební program: Alternativa pro naši zemi" [Election Program: The Alternative for our Country].
[64] ČSSD, "Volební program: Společně s Vámi pro lepší budoucnost" [Election Program 2000: Together with You for Better Future], 13, http://www.cssd.cz/dokumenty/archiv/volebni-programy (accessed February 14, 2008).

support EU membership based on the notion of a "return to Europe," as it believed the Czech Republic already was a full-fledged member of the European civilization, based on its Western values and its status as a democracy. Moreover, the ODS's stance underwent a change. While its 1992 and 1996 election programs were enthusiastic about the Czech Republic's integration into the EU, the ODS became increasingly critical of further deepening once negotiations started, raising concerns over the negative effect of integration on national sovereignty.

The 1992 election platform of the ODS called future integration into the then European Communities "the only means for long-term stabilization of our overall political, economic, and security situation."[65] Similarly, the 1996 program referred to EU membership as "the main foreign policy goal" of the ODS, one that would "ensure [the] peace, stability, security, freedom, and economic prosperity" of the country.[66] The program stressed the economic benefits of integration and claimed that EU membership would enhance the status of the country in Europe. It also contained a discussion on the necessity to protect national interest in the process of integration.

From the 1998 elections on, the ODS was much more critical of the potential impact of EU integration on the domestic sphere. The 1998 platform reiterated the goal of EU membership, but, at the same time, advocated "a realistic, not naïve approach to integration."[67] The program rejected the social model of the EU and warned of the dissolution of the state in the supranational structures of the EU. Similarly, the 2002 program confirmed the Eurorealist direction and again stressed the need to advocate

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[65] ODS, "Volebni program ODS: Svoboda a prosperita" [ODS Election Program: Freedom and Prosperity].
[66] ODS, "Volebni program ODS 1996: Svoboda a prosperita" [ODS Election Program 1996: Liberty and Prosperity], http://www.ods.cz/volby/programy/1996.php (accessed February 14, 2008).
[67] ODS, "Hlavu vzhůru: Volební program ODS" [Head up: ODS Election Program].

national interest. It argued that the Czech EU membership "must take place as soon as possible," and it advocated EU membership as "an instrument for the realization of our goals, our national interests." These interests were defined as "...the maintenance of clearly defined national identity, the solidification of international rule of law..., the assurance of territorial integrity, political sovereignty, independence, stability and security of the Czech Republic and the opening up and connecting of the market without needless obstacles." The ODS opposed "eurofederalism" and the European "superstate."[68] The program was critical of social and tax unification and the prospects of an EU military capability, referred to in the program as "fortress Europe."

Despite the criticism of some aspects of integration, the ODS consistently endorsed Czech accession to the EU. It declared its pro-EU stance in a leaflet prepared prior to the referendum on EU membership. The leaflet, entitled "When to the EU, then with ODS," reiterated the main contention points, but it also clearly endorsed EU membership:

> The entry of the Czech Republic in the European Union is a done deal for us. Economically, there is no alternative on the horizon to our membership in the EU. The common European market is and will be our most significant outlet. Remaining outside the EU would worsen the conditions for our trade with the EU. The evaluation of the Czech Republic by foreign investors would decline. The Czech economy would not benefit from it, but, on the contrary would lose. Today, we no longer deal with the question whether or not to enter the EU – we said already many times that we support the entry of the Czech Republic in the EU.[69]

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[68] ODS, "Volební desatero" [Ten Electoral Rules] (Prague, 2002), http://www.ods.cz/volby/programy/2002.php (accessed February 14, 2008).
[69] ODS, "Kdyz do EU tak s ODS: Programovy leaflet k referendu o vstupu CR do EU" [When to the EU, then with ODS: Program Leaflet for the Referendum on the Entry of the Czech Republic in the EU] (2003), http://www.ods.cz/volby/programy/2003.php (accessed February 14, 2008).

Based on these characteristics, then, it is possible to classify the ODS as soft Eurosceptic or pro-European "with reservations."[70] Moreover, the Eurosceptic attitude did not affect the ODS voters, who demonstrated a high level of support for EU membership throughout the accession period. ODS voters constituted over 40% of the "yes" vote in the June 2003 referendum on membership.[71]

There were two other major pro-EU parties that influenced the EU debate: the Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL) and the Freedom Union (US). The Christian Democrats were a junior partner in the coalition government led by Klaus's Civic Democrats in 1993-1997. The KDU-ČSL, which has roots in the Czechoslovak People's Party of the First Czechoslovak Republic, was a staunch supporter of the Czech integration into the EU. It advocated Czech accession on the basis of the shared Christian-democratic ideals of the EU and national interest. The 1998 program of the KDU-ČSL called EU enlargement "a continuous and irreversible process."[72]

The Freedom Union (US) was founded on January 17, 1998 by several members of the ODS who left the party in reaction to the crisis within the ODS at the end of 1997. The party explicitly contrasted its position with Klaus's Euroscepticism, adopting a pro-EU stance. In its 1998 program, the US presented a vision of Czech membership in "a strong and unified Europe" based on European values. The US also stressed its intention to defend national interests within the EU.[73]

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[70] Lubomír Kopeček and Jakub Šedo, "Czech and Slovak Political Parties and their Vision of European Integration," *Central European Political Studies Review* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 3, http://www.cepsr.com/dwnld/eu_kopeceksedo.rtf (accessed February 14, 2008).
[71] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 153.
[72] KDU-ČSL, "Průvodce politikou KDU-ČSL: Podrobný volební program 1998" [A Guide of KDU-ČSL Policy: Detailed Election Program 1998], http://www.kdu.cz/default.asp?page=510&idr=10149&IDCl=10959 (accessed April 21, 2008).
[73] Unie Svobody, "Volební program Unie svobody 1998" [1998 Election Program of the Freedom Union].

The two parties entered the 2002 elections under the name "Coalition." Its election program was strongly supportive of EU membership, and it provided both values and interests in its rationale for its pro-EU stance. Integration was presented as a process that "stems from common European values, overcomes historical traumas, brings numerous practical advantages, broadens the space of individual freedom, human rights and equal opportunities for all." The program, nevertheless, placed primacy on a "self-confident" membership that would serve the interests "of our country and our citizens." European integration would "fulfill our national interests" by solidifying the Czech statehood, bringing economic benefits through freedom of goods, services, labor, and capital, and giving Czechs a say in the EU policy-making process, which would enable the country "to assert Czech interests much more effectively..."[74]

The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) can be classified as mostly hard Eurosceptic when compared to other Czech parties.[75] The party, who had become a party on the periphery of the Czech political spectrum in 1989, was evoking both communism and nationalism and warned of German-dominated capitalism in an effort to gain a greater following. Its anti-EU rhetoric appealed to that section of the population disillusioned with the reforms pushed by the government both in response to and outside of EU accession requirements and those who considered themselves to be economically worse off than they were during the communist era. The anti-EU rhetoric succeeded, as the Communist Party placed third in the 2002 parliamentary elections. It gained 41 seats, which represented a significant increase over the 24 seats that it secured

[74] KDU-ČSL, "Programové prohlášení Koalice – Volby 2002" [Program Statement of the Coalition, 2002], http://www.kdu.cz/default.asp?page=510&idr=10149&IDCl=10946 (accessed February 14, 2008).
[75] Taggart and Szczerbiak, "Contemporary Euroscepticism in the Party Systems of the European Union Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe," 10.

in the 1998 elections.[76] Nevertheless, the Communist Party avoided, for the most part, making radical statements against the EU, and in the months prior to the referendum, it adopted a position of a "moderate no," supported by the claim that the terms of entry were not negotiated well. However, it conceded that EU membership might be a positive step "in a longer term perspective."[77] Moreover, the KSČM did not launch any significant anti-EU campaign prior to the referendum.

Despite the presence of oft-heated debates and Euroscepticism, the pro-EU stance prevailed in the Czech Republic during the period under examination. As the discussion above shows, European integration was supported by both normative and rationalist arguments. Nevertheless, the interest-driven arguments had a primacy over the idealist perspective promoted by Václav Havel.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES

Due to the fact that EU membership had to be confirmed by the public in a referendum, the Czech elites had to gain public support for their goal of taking the country into the EU. The public debate was, therefore, significantly more robust than was the case in regard to NATO membership. Nevertheless, Czech public opinion on EU membership was characterized as "*undercooled with fears rather than overheated with optimism*," as it consistently displayed high levels of Euroscepticism.[78] The scepticism was fuelled primarily by fears of the negative effect of EU membership on the economy and the standards of living of individual citizens. Moreover, Czech public opinion was

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[76] "Elections 2002," *RFE/RL* http://www.radio.cz/en/article/29067 (accessed February 15, 2008).
[77] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 148.
[78] Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, *Czech Republic and the EU: Year One* (Prague: Kusák Printing House, 2006), 11, http://www.euroskop.cz/admin/gallery/18/b19720de260c5dce9dddb2a30bc78c53.pdf (February 13, 2008).

influenced by national history, particularly the German and Soviet domination of Czechoslovakia. These negative sentiments, described below in greater detail, were strengthened by the actions carried out by the EU or some of its members, namely Germany and Austria. Both countries threatened to block the Czech Republic's accession to the EU — Germany on the grounds of the so-called Beneš Decrees that served as a basis for the forcible removal of the Sudeten Germans following the end of World War II, and Austria on grounds of the Beneš Decrees and the Temelín nuclear power plant. Finally, the public was responding to the arguments made by the Eurosceptic elements of the Czech political parties. Nevertheless, the Czech public voted overwhelmingly in favor of membership in the referendum, confirming not only the importance of their view of the EU as a promoter of democracy, economic wellbeing, and national identity, but also the generally predetermined nature of the Czech Republic's accession process. The discussion in the section on Czech Euroscepticism and the referendum on accession below demonstrates the shift in public opinion from a lukewarm attitude to a clear endorsement of membership in the referendum.

Constitutional Framework and the Information Campaign

The EU referendum was a watershed event in the history of the Czech Republic. For the first time in the history of the country, the citizens had the opportunity to participate in the determination of an important issue regarding the future of the country. This opportunity came as a result of an elite consensus on the need to administer a referendum, as stipulated in the Constitutional Law on Referendum, approved on

November 14, 2002.[79] The law stipulated that a simple majority was needed for accession to be approved, unlike the cases of Slovakia and Poland, which set a 50% voter turnout requirement. The question on the ballot was: "Do you agree with the Czech Republic becoming a member state of the European Union according to the EU-Czech Republic Treaty of Accession?" President Václav Klaus set the date of the referendum for June 13-14, 2003.

Prior to the referendum, the Czech government administered an information campaign. The campaign was directed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Communication Strategy Section. The campaign strategy, which was contracted out, was financed by 200 million crowns, which amounted almost to the amount (207 million crowns) spent by the five main political parties on the 2002 election campaign. Close to half of the funds (40-45%) went to traditional media, such as TV, press, billboards, and leaflets. The campaign also included an information telephone line and an internet information website.[80] The same percentage of funds (40-45%) was allocated to regional projects, namely the 20 Regional European Information Centers, and projects run by NGOs.[81] The remaining 10-20% of the campaign budget was used to promote Czech accession in the EU member states.[82]

The information campaign was required to present a balanced view of the pros and cons of the country's accession to the EU in order to allow the voters to make an informed decision. In reality, the campaign turned into a one-sided persuasion

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[79] Stanislav Balík, "Referendum o přistoupení České republiky k Evropské unii" [Referendum on Accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union], in *Cesta České republiky do Evropské unie* [The Road of the Czech Republic to the European Union], ed. Hynek Fajmon (Prague: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2004), 96-109.
[80] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 141-142.
[81] Balík, "Referendum o přistoupení České republiky k Evropské unii" [Referendum on Accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union], 97-101.
[82] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 143.

mechanism aimed at demonstrating the long-term benefits of membership for all and ensuring sufficient voter participation.[83] The message stressed the benefits of greater opportunities for education and employment, lower prices, and better quality products. The campaign aimed at targeting all groups within the population and especially those segments for whom the possibility of accession was a source of concern or where low participation in the referendum was expected, such as the elderly, the Roma community, those employed in the agriculture sector, and housewives.

The official campaign was accompanied by an unofficial "yes" campaign, organized by various actors, such as the Catholic Church, the main Czech trade union (ČMKOS), the Czech intelligentsia and cultural elite, and also the main political parties. For example, the Social Democrats (ČSSD) supported EU accession at its May Day celebration in 2003. The Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL) and the Freedom Union (US) organized their own campaigns.[84]

Besides the pro-EU campaign, there was also a "no" campaign.[85] The core messages included the rejection of the EU bureaucracy, warnings of the loss of national sovereignty under the domination of Germany, and claims that the Czech economy did not need the EU to sustain itself. The campaign was small and badly organized, and it lacked resources. The main protagonists of the campaign included Citizens Against the EU (a group characterized by a neo-fascist orientation), the small far-right National Party, and the Eurosceptic Alternative (a group advocating neoconservative views). The members of the "no" campaign used methods such as leaflets, emails, and discussion

[83] Balík, "Referendum o přistoupení České republiky k Evropské unii" [Referendum on Accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union], 97.
[84] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 145.
[85] Ibid., esp. 148-150.

events, but they generally failed to attract the attention of the public or the media. In the end, the "no" campaign played only an insignificant role in the debate.

Public Euroscepticism

The aim of the pro-EU information campaign was to ensure a respectable turnout and a high percentage of "yes" votes in the face of widespread Euroscepticism, defined as the percentage of the public that would vote "no" in a referendum on the country's membership in the EU at a given point in time. The Czech Republic belonged to a group of countries where the level of public Euroscepticism was relatively high.[86] To illustrate, according to a Gallup Poll conducted in spring 2004, only 41% of the Czech population considered the upcoming accession to the EU "a good thing," while 17% considered it "a bad thing."[87] As for participation in the referendum, the respondents indicating that they would participate in the referendum hovered in the 77-80% range, according to surveys conducted between October 2002 and March 2003. Those who would vote "yes" in the same period represented between 51 and 59% of the population.[88] Finally, according to a survey conducted by the Czech Public Opinion Research Centre in June 2004, 44% of respondents indicated that the process of European integration had gone too far; only 38% stated integration should advance.[89]

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[86] Taggart and Szczerbiak, "Contemporary Euroscepticism in the Party Systems of the European Union Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe," 16.
[87] European Commission, "Eurobarometer EB 61 – CC-EB 2004.1: Comparative Highlights" (May 2004): 4, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2004/cceb_2004.1_highlights.pdf (accessed January 31, 2008).
[88] Adela Seidlova, "Participation in the Referendum on Accession of the Czech Republic in the European Union, Votes For and Against, Do We Want the Euro," *Press News*, CVVM, April 2, 2003.
[89] Nadezda Horakova, "Political Parties and European Integration in the Opinions of the Czech Public," *Press News*, CVVM, September 3, 2004, 3.

The development of public opinion was affected by the nature of the stages of the accession process, with the support being as low as 40% in 2000-2001 as a result of the challenging nature of the accession negotiations during that period.[90] As the EU membership was approaching, the public also started to examine the prospects in a more analytical way. The attitude shifted from a relatively positive one that associated the EU with a general pro-Western trend to more critical one that regarded the EU as the source of domestic-level reforms that had the potential to be both beneficial and costly. This weighing and evaluating of specific benefits and costs led to the level of support for EU membership dropping below 50% in 1999 to mid-2001.

The expected benefits could be split into two categories: the state and the individual. Those in favor of membership generally anticipated an improvement in the performance and functioning of the state and its institutions, as well as of the economy. On the individual level, the proponents of EU membership expected more opportunities in the realm of everyday life, such as better job opportunities abroad and more options to study abroad. The negative stance toward EU membership was linked primarily to economic concerns, such as fears of increased competition in the labor market, higher unemployment, and an increased cost of living. A secondary set of fears had to do with concerns over the potential loss of national identity and the Czech Republic's relative status within the EU. These factors, however, played a minor role compared to those linked to the economic concerns.[91] A mere 10% of Czechs expected the economic situation to improve. Close to a third (30%) of the population did not expect any change, while fully 46% of the respondents indicated that they believed that the economic

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[90] Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, *Czech Republic and the EU: Year One*, 10-11.
[91] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 139.

situation would get worse.[92] The Czechs were more pessimistic than all of the other candidate countries and all of the EU member countries in regard to the future economic benefits of EU membership.[93]

Czech public opinion on the issue of EU membership was affected also by the negative aspects of the Czech Republic's relationship with two of its EU member-state neighbors – Austria and Germany. The Czech-Austrian relations were marred by the issue of the Temelín nuclear power plant, whose opening the Austrians vehemently opposed for safety reasons. The dispute was finally resolved in November 2001 when the Czech and Austrian governments agreed on tough safety and environmental measures. This dispute had a negative effect on Czech popular opinion in regard to Austria, as the public saw the Austrian actions as a limit on Czech national sovereignty.

National sovereignty was also an issue in connection with the conflict over the Beneš Decrees, which soured relations between the Czech Republic and both Germany and Austria. The Beneš Decrees were documents issued by the Czech President Edvard Beneš while in exile in London during Czechoslovakia's occupation and in Czechoslovakia immediately following the end of World War II. The Decrees dealt with numerous aspects of the Czechoslovak state, such as the activities of the Resistance in exile, the waging of the war alongside the Allies against Germany, and the post-war reconstruction. As a result of these Decrees, nearly 3 million Sudeten Germans were expelled from Czechoslovakia or decided to leave the country.[94] The expellees lost the title to the property that they had left behind.

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[92] European Commission, "Eurobarometer EB 61 – CC-EB 2004.1: Comparative Highlights," 3.
[93] Ibid.
[94] For Beneš Decrees and expulsion, see, for example, Alfred M. Zayas, *Nemesis at Potsdam: The Expulsion of Germans from the East*, 3rd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); and Eduard

Despite the 1997 "Czech-German Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future Development," according to which both sides opted for joint reconciliation projects in lieu of individual compensation,[95] interest groups from Austria and Germany, primarily the Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft, managed to persuade their governments to demand that Prague repeal the Beneš Decrees as a prerequisite for EU membership. The issue was put to rest, at least in the EU context, by a 2002 legal analysis sponsored by the European Parliament. While recommending that Prague express regret over the expulsion and the violence against the Sudeten Germans during the transfer period, the study concluded that the Beneš Decrees were not incompatible with EU laws and should not block the Czech entry into the EU.[96] Nevertheless, the fact that this bilateral Czech-German issue was brought to the EU level and held as an obstacle to Czech membership despite the prior official reconciliation between the two countries deepened the skepticism on the part of the Czech elites and population vis-à-vis the EU and national sovereignty.

The Referendum

The Czech leaders placed great importance on maximizing voter turnout. They believed that a turnout of over 50% of the population was necessary in order to ensure the legitimacy of the process. The voter turnout was a mere 55.21% of the eligible population, which closely mirrored the voter turnout of 58% during the 2002

Benes, *Memoirs of Dr. Eduard Benes: From Munich to New War and New Victory* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954).

[95] "German-Czech Declaration on Mutual Relations and their Future Development of 21 January 1997."

[96] European Parliament, "Legal Opinion on the Beneš-Decrees and the Accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union" (October 2002), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/studies/benesdecrees/pdf/opinions_en.pdf (accessed March 12, 2008).

parliamentary election. EU membership was endorsed by 77.33% of the voters, a lower figure than in many of the other candidate countries, such as Slovakia (92.46%) and Hungary (83.76%).[97]

Nevertheless, the results were positive in that they showed only small variations in terms of social characteristics and demography. For example, the difference in support between men and women voters was only 1% (77% men to 78% women), and the difference between urban (78%) and rural (75%) voters was also very small. Similarly, neither age nor education functioned as a determinant in the voting patterns. Party affiliation, on the other hand, was a major source of differences, with the voters of the governing coalition (ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, and US) and the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) overwhelmingly endorsing accession and the Communist voters generally opposing it (63%).[98]

In short, the results of the referendum confirmed the results of public opinion surveys conducted in the period prior to accession indicating that the Czech public generally viewed EU membership as a "necessary evil." The referendum demonstrated that "the prevailing trend in Czech society is a *long-term view and assessment of the EU as a strategic investment* into the improvement of stable external and internal living conditions," leading to "a sober evaluation of the EU as an *opportunity* for development, rather than a *guarantee* of growth" on the part of the majority of the Czech population.[99]

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[97] "Referenda o přistoupení k EU v kandidátských zemích" [Referenda on Accession to the EU in the Candidate Countries], *Euroskop*, http://www.euroskop.cz/58040/114506/clanek/referendum/referenda-o-pristoupeni-k-eu-v-kandidatskych-zemich/ (accessed March 14, 2008).
[98] Hanley, "A Nation of Sceptics?," 151-152.
[99] Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, *Czech Republic and the EU: Year One*, 13.

COMPLIANCE WITH EU CONDITIONALITY

Despite the pro-EU leaning of the successive Czech governments, the implementation of EU conditionality was neither an automatic nor a smooth process. Even though the Czech Republic was considered a successful candidate in the pre-negotiation stage of accession, it suffered setbacks in the transformation process, and this threatened the country's bid to join the EU. The setbacks were related primarily to its economic reform program and slow approximation of its legislation to the EU legislation. However, unlike its Slovak partner, the Czech Republic did not encounter major problems in the area of democratic conditionality. Czech policymaking in the areas where there were shortcomings was influenced in a direct way through the European Commission's Regular Reports, which evaluated the applicants' progress in satisfying the Copenhagen Criteria. These reports were a primary example of EU conditionality at work, as evidenced by changes in the administrative structure of the Czech Republic that clearly reflected the judgments of the Regular Reports.

The Regular Reports issued between 1997 and 2000 proved to be crucial to the Czech Republic's implementation of the Copenhagen Criteria, with the 1998 and 1999 reports being especially critical. The 1997 evaluation was issued in response to the Czech Republic's application for membership. It was published in the framework of Agenda 2000 in July 1997, and it provided the initial evaluation of the country's success or lack thereof in implementing the EU Copenhagen Criteria on the domestic level. The report was divided into four main sections — political criteria, economic criteria, ability to assume obligations of membership, and administrative capacity to apply the *acquis* in the domestic structures. The Czech Republic received a positive evaluation in regard to the

democratic criteria, with the report stating the following: "The Czech Republic presents the characteristics of a democracy, with stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities."[100] The report, nevertheless, identified shortcomings in several areas, namely, the status of the Roma minority, the workings of the justice system, and legislation protecting the freedom of print.

The Commission was also positive with regard to the economic criteria, referring to the country as a "functioning market economy" that "should be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces in the Union in the medium term..."[101] The Commission also referred to the fact that the Czech Republic was, in 1995, the first post-communist country from Central and Eastern Europe to become a member of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The main shortcomings highlighted by the report included insufficient privatization of the banking sector and the failure to reform the institutions in the financial and capital markets. Finally, the report expressed optimism in regard to Prague's ability to take on the obligations of membership and to apply the *acquis* in the future, providing an overhaul of the administrative and judicial structures was accomplished. Based on this positive report, the EU issued an invitation to the Czech Republic to start negotiations in March 1998. The reports that followed concentrated on the rate at which the applicants were adopting the EU *acquis*, while still monitoring compliance with the democratic and economic criteria.

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[100] European Commission, "Agenda 2000 - Commission Opinion on Slovakia's Application for Membership of the European Union" (July 15, 1997): 16, http://www.dpt.gov.tr/abigm/abib/gundem2000/Slovakya%20Agenda%202000.pdf (accessed January 29, 2007).
[101] Ibid., 33.

The 1998 Regular Report was very critical of the Czech Republic's progress in satisfying the Copenhagen Criteria, namely in the area of the country's administrative structures and the judiciary.[102] The report confirmed that the Czech Republic fulfilled the political criteria, but it did recommend that Prague "devote continuing attention to the reform of the judiciary, to fighting corruption more effectively and to improving the situation of the Roma."[103] The Commission evaluated positively the Czech economy, but it stressed the need for reforms in several areas, such as the control of capital markets and economic competition. Even though the Czech government and the negotiating team noted the Commission had made several mistakes and had failed to incorporate certain information provided by Prague, they accepted the report as "an objective and balanced document."[104] The new minority government, elected in June 1998 and led by Miloš Zeman from the pro-EU Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), was adamant about making progress in EU accession: "The European dimension was no longer considered a question of foreign policy and now became…a domestic issue. The transformation process and the *accession* process now walked (with some minor exceptions) hand in hand."[105]

Despite the official pro-EU policy of the Zeman government, the 1999 Regular Report was extremely critical. Once again, the criticism did not come as a surprise to the Czech leaders. Already in February 1999, Pavel Telička, the Czech chief negotiator, warned that the Czech Republic might lose its position in the first wave of candidates and

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[102] European Commission, "Regular Report from the Commission on Czech Republic's Progress toward Accession" (November 4, 1998), http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1998/czech_en.pdf (accessed January 29, 2007).
[103] Ibid., 11.
[104] David Muller, "Cesta České republiky do Evropské unie" [The Road of the Czech Republic to the European Union], in *Cesta České republiky do Evropské unie* [The Road of the Czech Republic to the European Union], ed. Hynek Fajmon (Prague: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2004), 37.
[105] Lenka Anna Rovna, "The Enlargement of the European Union: The Case of the Czech Republic," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 2, no. 1 (2001): 113.

fall into the second wave unless the reforms of the administration and the judicial system were implemented. Similarly, Foreign Minister Jan Kavan urged that the process of the adoption of the *acquis* be sped up in order to obtain a more positive evaluation from the Commission at the end of 1999. Nevertheless, the Czech ministries failed to respond to the warnings with a higher level of activity.[106] As a result, by the time the 1999 report was published on October 13, 1999, the Czech Republic had managed to close only seven chapters of the *acquis*.

The 1999 Regular Report criticized the Czech Republic's limited progress in the adoption of necessary legislation and the improvement of administrative structures, a result of "the length of procedures for preparing draft legislation by ministries and of the parliamentary process,...the minority status of the government..., and the fact that certain priority policy areas had not received sufficient attention from previous governments."[107] The report urged more progress in the reforming of the civil service and judicial system and in the privatization process.

Minority rights were a major topic in the 1999 evaluation, which stated that "the situation of the 250,000 to 300,000 Roma had not really improved."[108] It reported widespread discrimination, high levels of anti-Roma prejudice, social exclusion, and inadequate protection by the police and the courts as the main problems in this sphere. The report highlighted the "Matiční Street" controversy as an example of the anti-Roma sentiments. This issue concerned the construction of a ceramic fence in the city of Ústí

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[106] Muller, "Cesta České republiky do Evropské unie" [The Road of the Czech Republic to the European Union], 37.
[107] European Commission, "1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Czech Republic's Progress toward Accession" (October 13, 1999): 11, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1999/czech_en.pdf, (accessed January 29, 2007).
[108] Ibid., 16.

nad Labem separating the Roma from the non-Roma residents. The Czech government decried the action, and the wall ended up being torn down, primarily due to EU pressure.

The critical nature of the 1999 report proved a decisive point in the Czech Republic's adoption of EU conditionality. The national leaders realized that they needed to create broader support in the parliament for expediting the process of the adoption of EU legislation. This was facilitated by an unprecedented agreement between the two strongest political parties — the ruling Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) and the opposition Civic Democratic Party (ODS). The agreement, which was initiated in direct response to the critical 1999 report, stipulated the goal of achieving faster approximation of the *acquis*. Under the agreement, which was welcomed by both the European Commission and the European Parliament, the two parties pledged to consult each other and collaborate on the issues of accession.

As a result of the 1999 report, and thanks to the ensuing newfound cooperation between the two main political parties, the Czech government was finally able to reorganize the institutional provisions for accession preparation within and among the individual ministries and to fulfill the commitments adopted during the negotiations. In 2000, the ministries and the parliament sped up and improved the process of approximation of the EU law. The changes also led to the strengthening of the initially weak position of the chief negotiator, which resulted in a high level of coordination between the chief negotiator and the administration during the most important period of the negotiations, i.e. between 2001 and 2002. Without these steps, the Czech Republic would likely have been unable to fulfill the obligations agreed to during the negotiations. The changes adopted in the aftermath of the 1999 report resulted in a much more positive

evaluation of the Czech Republic's accession efforts in the 2000, 2001, and 2002 Regular Reports and in the country's ability to successfully close all chapters of the EU *acquis*. Following the final round of negotiations at the December 2002 Copenhagen Summit, the European Commission delivered a favorable opinion on the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union.[109]

CONCLUSION

The EU enlargement of 2004 represents a point that brought an end to the transition period of the Czech Republics. As this case study demonstrates, achieving EU membership was a long-term process involving all of the successive Czech governments of the post-communist era. The Czech historical legacy affected the country's approach to the EU — on the one hand, the Czechoslovak inter-war democratic tradition and the legacy of anti-communism created conditions favorable to integration, while, on the other hand, the history of foreign domination was the source of a deep aversion to integration. The debate over values was concluded quickly, with the EU being accepted as the embodiment of freedom and democracy. The majority of the debate was, then, conducted in the realm of interests, as determined by the nature and the requirements of the accession process.

The debate was top-down heavy, with the Czech leaders playing the dominant role. As the discussion of the most significant political figures, governmental positions, and party platforms demonstrates, a consensus existed in the Czech Republic regarding the desirability of EU membership. While political actors debated the nature of accession, as evidenced in the Eurosceptic position of Václav Klaus and his ODS, the goal of

[109] European Commission, "Commission Opinion of 19 February 2003," 3.

membership was ultimately not disputed by any major actor, with the exception of the pariah Communist Party. This pro-EU attitude was successfully transferred to the public level, as demonstrated by the clear endorsement of EU membership in the June 2003 referendum.

Despite this elite-level consensus on the desirability of the country's membership in the EU, the Czech Republic declined from the position of frontrunner to that of a laggard in the accession process in the second half of the 1990s. Conflicting interests of the parties and their leaders resulted in a lack of cooperation, which went hand in hand with the insufficient progress in the administering of the reforms needed to satisfy the Copenhagen Criteria. The substance and effectiveness of the conditionality of the EU was especially evident in the Regular Reports issued by the European Commission. The critical evaluations expressed in these reports in the period 1997-1999 encouraged the Czech leadership to overcome their differences and reach a consensus in order to ensure compliance with the entirety of the Copenhagen Criteria and at last reach the goal of EU membership.

CHAPTER VI

THE SLOVAK ACCESSION TO NATO AND THE EU

The case of Slovakia becoming a member of NATO and the EU is important because it illustrates the limitations of membership conditionality in instances where there is insufficient willingness on the part of the national leadership to comply. At the same time, the discussion of this case below demonstrates the inescapable nature of conditionality with respect to the threat of exclusion from European integration. The analysis presented below also makes evident the crucial nature of the role of elite behavior with regard to compliance, especially considered in juxtaposition with the case of the Czech Republic presented in the preceding two chapters. In the Czech Republic, elite opinion was characterized by a broad consensus on the desirability and necessity of NATO and EU integration. The Czech elites reconnected to the traditions of communist dissent and the historical experience of democracy under the First Czechoslovak Republic, thus finding it natural to follow the path of Western integration. In Slovakia, however, the elites were far more divided on the issue of Western integration in the first five years of the existence of the independent state.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar, who was in power between 1993 and 1998 (with a brief interlude in 1994), Slovakia differed from the Czech Republic and the other Visegrad Group partners by its nationalist tendencies, which were fuelled by a sense of national pride and self-esteem originating from the process of state-building and the constructing of a new national identity. Mečiar and his coalition partners skillfully exploited the popular support for the building of the Slovak nation by wrapping

their goal of strengthening their power in nationalist rhetoric.[1] Slovakia soon started to diverge from the course set by Czechoslovakia and maintained by the independent Czech Republic, whereby democratization, implementation of market economy, and NATO and EU membership were the priorities of the country's leadership.

The Slovak foreign policy under Mečiar was characterized by an "overestimation of its own importance" for NATO and the EU.[2] Slovak leaders and academics considered the country's geographical position to be "unique and crucial" for the European continent.[3] Slovakia was the only member of the Visegrad Group that shared borders with all the other members, and it saw itself as an important bridge connecting Poland and the Czech Republic with Hungary. Moreover, the country's leadership advanced the idea that its border with an unstable Ukraine in the East was an important element of the greater European security. On the grounds of Slovak uniqueness, Mečiar and his government rejected the fast-paced economic reforms that would bring the country closer to integration with the EU. Moreover, the Slovak leadership was doubtful of the necessity to join NATO and started exploring the options of Slovakia serving as "a bridge between the West and the East" and of "active neutrality," which equated to closer cooperation with Russia. Most importantly for the discussion central to this study, Mečiar underestimated the importance of internal politics as the measure of the process of democratization used by NATO and the EU. Slovakia under Mečiar embarked upon a detour from democracy, characterized by affronts to the constitutional order, the rule of law, and the treatment of minorities.

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[1] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 46-47.
[2] Ivo Samson, "Security Policy of the Slovak Republic: Deficiencies in Meeting the NATO Criteria," Final Report to the NATO Research Fellowship Program 1997 – 1999, 6, http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/97-99/samson.pdf (accessed February 14, 2008).
[3] Ibid., 8-9.

Slovakia's defiance of democratic conditionality under the Mečiar government resulted in the country's exclusion from the negotiations for membership, an event announced at the July 1997 NATO Madrid Summit and the December 1997 EU Luxembourg Council. This failure resulted in Slovakia becoming the only country among the post-communist applicants to experience a halt in the accession process. Thus, while in the Czech Republic the elites were critical for the successful progress toward NATO and EU membership, the Slovak leadership was critical to the process that resulted in the exclusion of the country from the 1999 NATO enlargement and the EU accession negotiations until the year 2000. By the same token, it was the Slovak leadership that arose from the 1998 parliamentary elections that was critical to the reversal of the negative trend and led the country into NATO and the EU in 2004.

Unlike the Czech Republic's accessions to NATO and the EU, which took place five years apart and where NATO membership represented a step toward EU membership, the Slovak Republic's accessions to NATO and the EU became one indivisible process. Following the rejection of Mečiar's Slovakia by the two institutions in 1997, achieving membership in NATO and the EU became, in the eyes of the Mečiar opposition and, eventually, the post-1998 government as well as the Slovak public, synonymous with ending Slovakia's external isolation and confirming the country's successful democratization. The very close connection that existed between the Slovak accession to NATO and to the EU, combined with the identical nature of the issues that led to Slovakia's absence from institutional integration for a period of five years, suggest that treatment of NATO and EU conditionality in two different chapters is not warranted.

This chapter, therefore, provides a comprehensive analysis of both NATO and EU conditionality vis-à-vis Slovakia.

Before analyzing the workings of NATO and EU conditionality in the Slovak context in greater detail, we will discuss the development of the Slovak post-1989 elite, as familiarity with this historical background is necessary to a proper understanding of the analysis that follows. This discussion sheds light on the differences in the formation of the Czech and Slovak post-communist leadership, as well as the resulting differences in the interests and norms espoused by the two leaderships. These differences, in turn, help explain why NATO and EU conditionality was more successful in the Czech Republic than it was in Slovakia in the period 1993-1998.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section, as prefaced above, describes the evolution of the Slovak leadership. What becomes clear is the defining role of Slovakia's historical experience, especially that of the communist era, on the post-1989 Slovak elites. This section also reviews the declaratory policies toward NATO and the EU on the part of the Slovak governments in the period 1993-2004, which were continuously in favor of membership as demonstrated by government programs and official declarations. The second section analyzes the same governments, with the purpose of showing the discrepancies between the rhetoric and the actual policies of the Mečiar government between 1993 and 1998, which contradicted NATO and EU democratic conditionality. This failure of conditionality is then juxtaposed with its success in helping the Mečiar opposition unite under the leadership of Mikuláš Dzurinda, win both the 1998 and 2002 elections, and steer the country toward membership in both NATO and the EU in 2004. Finally, the third section is dedicated to the analysis of public

opinion in Slovakia toward NATO and EU membership. The overwhelming "yes" vote in the May 2003 referendum on EU membership served to confirm the goal of the post-Mečiar governments to bring the country out of isolation and into the key Western institutions.

SLOVAK ELITES

The main difference between the Czech and the Slovak cases in regard to NATO and EU conditionality has to do with the quality of leadership. As demonstrated in the previous two chapters, the Czech post-1989 leadership experienced significant turnover, whereby the communist elites were replaced, to a significant degree, by former dissidents and technocrats who had not been co-opted by the communist regime. This new Czech elite had clear Western leanings and was adamant about taking the country "back to Europe" by instituting democratic and economic reforms and achieving membership in NATO and the EU. The presence of Václav Havel as the moral leader of the country meant that the Czech Republic had a clearly defined Western normative orientation. Moreover, the successive Czech governments advocated and carried out reforms that were aligned with the principles contained within the conditions for EU and NATO membership. In those instances where the Czech decision-makers failed to enact legislation and pursue the reforms required by NATO and the EU due to political dynamics, conditionality served as an impetus for overcoming political divisions and achieving a necessary level of cooperation.

In Slovakia, however, a large percentage of the post-Velvet Revolution leadership had been connected to the communist regime and, as a result, continued to exhibit anti-

reform and illiberal tendencies. These tendencies were clearly present during the rule of Vladimír Mečiar, prime minister of Slovakia in 1993-1998. Moreover, the fact that the Slovak dissidents were sidelined by the former communists meant that Slovakia lacked the normative basis necessary for establishing a clear path to democratization. Independent Slovakia did not have anyone of Havel's stature who could serve as a moral guide for the young nation. Even though it was Mečiar who submitted Slovakia's application for NATO and EU membership and declared on numerous occasions his desire to take Slovakia into the two institutions, he and his supporters in the government were more interested in solidifying their political and economic power. In fact, the conditions for NATO and EU membership required reforms that went against the interests of Mečiar and his followers. EU and NATO conditionality failed in Slovakia under Mečiar because its requirements were contrary to Mečiar's interests.

Slovak Post-1989 Leadership

Unlike the Czech Republic, which experienced a turnover of elites with a large portion of the communist leadership being replaced by former dissidents and technocrats, the changes in the Slovak elites were not especially dramatic. Due to a more positive view of Slovak history in the communist era, a reflection of the economic development and minimal political persecution of Slovaks during the normalization period, the Slovaks held a less radical position in regard to those among the leadership who had been associated with the communist regime.

According to 1993 data, former communists constituted 40% of the Slovak political elite, with 16% having held functions in the Communist Party in 1988. In the

Czech Republic, the percentage of former communists among the political elite was 22.4%, with only 1.2% having served in a party function.[4] The November 1991 funeral of Gustáv Husák, Slovak politician and Czechoslovak president from 1975 to 1989, also serves as an example of the more positive attitude toward Communism on the part of the Slovak post-communist elite. Husák's funeral was attended by numerous key Slovak leaders, such as dissidents Ján Čarnogurský (the then Slovak prime minister) and František Mikloško, as well as many representatives from the HZDS, including Vladimír Mečiar. It is hard to imagine any Czech dissidents attending a funeral of a Czech communist president.

As discussed in the previous chapter, many former dissidents and internally exiled technocrats replaced the communists in public positions in the Czech Republic. Majority of the technocrats were economists and finance experts, and several of them, such as Václav Klaus, had studied abroad. These experiences influenced, according to their own account, their views on the direction that the country should take, i.e. integration with the West.[5] The Slovak post-1989 leadership was, on the other hand, characterized by a high level of continuity with the Communist regime. The group of Slovak dissidents was significantly smaller than the Czech one. To illustrate, whereas about 1,800 Czechs had signed "Charter 77," the dissident manifesto, by 1989, only about 20 Slovaks, most of whom lived in the Czech lands, had signed the document by that same point in time. Overall, the anti-communist opposition was weaker in Slovakia. The Slovak dissent was concentrated in Christian groups, but those had religious rather than political goals. Some

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[4] Lubomír Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], (Brno: Center for the Study of Democracy and Culture, 2006), 158.
[5] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 78.

of the exceptions include Catholic intellectuals, such as Ján Čarnogurský, František Mikloško, and Ján Langoš.[6]

The anti-communist dissent was weaker in Slovakia because of the modest nature of normalization. Unlike in the Czech lands, where large-scale purges led to the creation of "dissatisfied and socially marginalized" intelligentsia, in Slovakia the "men of '68" were, to a large extent, only demoted and were able to continue in their careers. In many instances they were allowed back into the Communist party after sufficient "self-criticism."[7] The Slovaks had a more positive attitude toward the communist era also because it signified to them a period of economic growth. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter III, the industrialization implemented by the Communists led to near equalization of socio-economic indicators in the two parts of the federation.

The differences between the Czech and Slovak elites became apparent as early as the early 1990s, as reflected in the developments within the two post-communist movements that emerged in response to the Velvet Revolution — the Czech Civic Forum (OF) and the Slovak Public Against Violence (VPN). Unlike the OF, which included, for the most part, dissidents and technocrats not associated with the communist regime, the VPN contained many reform communists. The VPN members that belonged to the intelligentsia soon demonstrated a lack of interest in assuming official posts, a position that stood in stark contrast to the Czech dissident and intellectual Václav Havel, who became the Czechoslovak president, or the Czech dissident Petr Pithart, who assumed the post of the Czech prime minister in February 1990. Moreover, the VPN included several reform communists (Alexander Dubček, Vladimír Mečiar, and Michal Kováč) and even

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[6] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], 145.
[7] Ibid., 146.

individuals who had been members of the communist party up until the Velvet Revolution (Čič, Schuster, Čalfa) on its candidacy list for the 1990 elections.[8] The lack of interest on the part of the Slovak dissidents and intellectuals in assuming positions in the administration meant that "there were few leaders in Slovakia apart from those associated with the Communist system who had any experience in...leading a mass-based political party or movement."[9] As a result, reform communists and pre-1989 communists were easily able to enter politics.[10] These Slovak leaders did not advocate the need for social, political, and economic transformation as strongly as the new Czech leaders.

Milan Čič, Vladimír Mečiar, Ján Čarnogurský, and Michal Kováč are primary examples of the post-1989 Slovak elite. Milan Čič, the first post-communist Slovak prime minister, was a reform communist who had occupied high posts in the communist administration prior to 1968. He was fired from his post of deputy Slovak justice minister in 1970, only to be reinstated into high positions, such as director of the Institute on State and Law in the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV). He was allowed to rejoin the Slovak Communist party, and he served as the federal justice minister during the last two years of the communist regime. After the Velvet Revolution, he was appointed to the position of prime minister, where he remained until the June 1990 elections, when he was replaced by Vladimír Mečiar. Unlike his counterpart caretaker prime minister on the Czech side, František Pitra, who was forced to leave politics because of his communist background, Čič continued his political career, first as a parliamentarian for Mečiar's

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[8] Ibid., 156.
[9] Sharon L. Wolchik, "Democratization and Political Participation in Slovakia," in *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe*, ed. Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 208-209.
[10] Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*, 117.

Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) and then as president of the Slovak Constitutional Court.

Vladimír Mečiar was elected in June 1990 as a candidate of Public Against Violence (VPN), which was the Slovak partner of the Czech Civic Forum (OF). Mečiar served as prime minister three times between 1990 and 1998. Like Číč, he had begun a promising career tied to the communist party in the 1960s. In 1969, however, he was ousted from the party for his support of political reform. Unlike the Czech dissidents in the same situation, he was allowed to pursue higher education, eventually becoming a corporate lawyer. All along, he maintained close connections to prominent reform communists, such as Alexander Dubček and Číč, resulting in his appointment as interior minister by Číč in the first post-communist government.[11]

Mečiar's replacement in the post of the Slovak prime minister, Ján Čarnogurský, was a dissident, but not in the same way as his Czech counterparts. His dissent preceded the events of 1968 because he was a practicing Catholic. However, due to his father's close connections to Czechoslovak President Gustáv Husák, he was allowed to obtain his PhD in law and work as a lawyer. Moreover, as a Catholic, he represented one of the key aspects of the Slovak national identity. He was allowed to publish a Catholic samizdat journal, Bratislavské Listy (Bratislava Papers). Even though he lost his job following his defense in court of the signatories of "Charter 77," he was not forced to work in blue-collar jobs, as many of the Czech dissidents were. Instead, he was demoted to a corporate lawyer. He did not become a true dissident until 1986, when he was fired and spent some time in prison, which, in fact, eventually led to a successful political career. His activities in the late 1980s in support of greater religious freedom, such as his 1988 pilgrimages to

[11] Haughton, *Constraints and Opportunities of Leadership in Post-Communist Europe,* 12-13.

shrines, which attracted 800,000 followers, and his role in a candlelight demonstration in Bratislava the same year, gained him moral authority similar to that of the Czech dissidents.[12]

Michal Kováč, the President of Slovakia from 1993 to 1998, is, like Mečiar, an example of a reform communist technocrat who became a part of the Slovak post-communist elite. Kováč had worked in the banking sector in Czechoslovakia, lectured in Cuba (1964-1965), and represented one of the state Czechoslovak banks in London (1967-1969). He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1970, but was allowed to return to the banking sector and rise through the ranks. In the period 1978-1989, he worked at the Central Institute for National Economic Planning. He also served as the Finance Minister of the Slovak republic from December 1989 to May 1991 and as the Speaker of the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly from June to December 1992. He was one of the founders, together with Mečiar, of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), and he served as the HZDS Vice Chairman from June 1991 until his election as president on February 15, 1993.[13]

As this brief survey illustrates, the Slovak leadership displayed characteristics of continuity with the communist era. Some of these leaders, such as Vladimír Mečiar, lacked the genuine desire to implement democracy and market economy in Slovakia and to ensure Slovakia's integration into the NATO and EU structures. Instead, they concentrated on solidifying their power. The quality of the Slovak leadership became a major handicap for Slovakia's democratic consolidation in the 1990s.

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[12] Wolchik, "Democratization and Political Participation in Slovakia," 207.
[13] Office of the President of the Slovak Republic, "Resume – Michal Kováč," http://www.prezident.sk/?zivotopis-Kováč (accessed May 7, 2008).

Slovak Governments and their Attitudes to NATO and the EU

Unlike the Czech case, where the interests and norms of the successive governments and the key political parties were by and large aligned with the requirements of NATO and EU conditionality, the requirements of NATO and EU membership often were in conflict with the domestic-policy goals of the Mečiar government. Thus, even though the successive Slovak governments, including those led by Mečiar and his HZDS, and many Slovak political parties advocated integration in the Euro-Atlantic institutions in their official positions, their actual behavior contradicted these international policy goals.

In the Czech Republic, there was no question as to the pro-Western leaning on the part of the governments and the political parties within these governments. Bratislava under the rule of Mečiar, however, was not able to manifest such strong European credentials. Unlike the Czech leaders, who disassociated themselves very clearly from the East by proclaiming their desire to join the institutions of the West, namely the EU and NATO, Slovakia's leaders did not have a very clear vision. Even though membership in NATO and the EU was defined as a primary foreign policy goal, the actions on the part of the Mečiar governments pointed in a different direction, namely closer cooperation with the East, particularly Russia. For example, many members of the HZDS, including Mečiar, expressed positive views of cooperation with Russia. Moreover, the coalition partners of the HZDS in the 1994-1998 government—the extreme-right Slovak National Party (SNS) and the "crypto-communist" Workers' Party (ZRS)—opposed an unambiguous Western orientation. They advocated the principles of national sovereignty and independence, and supported neutrality and panslavism (the notion of a unity of

Slavic peoples rooted in linguistic similarities and shared history) as alternatives to EU and, especially, NATO membership.[14]

The ideas of neutrality and panslavism were especially popular in the first years of Slovakia's independence. They reflected the notion that, after a long history of subservience to others, namely the Hungarians and the Czechs, the independent Slovakia should determine its own future instead of following policies established outside of the country—in Brussels by NATO and the EU.[15] Russia was a common theme for the ideas of neutrality and panslavism. Russia, the largest Slavic nation, was perceived as the "protector of the Slavic nations" and as the "guarantor of Slovak neutrality."[16] The Russian option was viewed as desirable also for economic reasons, as the two countries had a history of strong trade relations. Russia represented a large market for Slovak products, and it supplied Slovakia with natural resources. Moreover, while NATO and the EU were stepping up their criticism of the activities of the Mečiar government in the mid-1990s, Russia showed consistent positive interest in Slovakia, and cooperation was not attached to any conditions.[17]

The situation changed with the arrival of the Dzurinda government in 1998. The Dzurinda government rejected the idea of Slovakia serving as the "bridge" between Western Europe and Russia, declared NATO and EU membership to be its priorities, and, more importantly, took practical steps in order to fulfill these goals. The successful trend

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[14] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 47, ft. 34.
[15] Drent et al., "Organising National Defences for NATO Membership," 79.
[16] Vendula Krejčová, "Vliv národní identity na formování slovenského zahraničněpolitického postoje k NATO" [Influence of National Identity on the Formation of Slovak Foreign Policy Approach toward NATO], (Bachelor thesis, Masaryk University, Brno, 2007), 15, http://is.muni.cz/th/103262/fss_b/Krejčová_Vendula_103262.doc (accessed May 11, 2008).
[17] Ibid., 16.

continued following the 2002 elections when, again under the leadership of the Dzurinda government, Slovakia achieved NATO and EU membership in 2004.

The Mečiar Governments

Vladimír Mečiar served twice as Prime Minister of independent Slovakia. In the first period (from January 1993 to March 1994), he led the coalition composed of his HZDS and the extreme right Slovak National Party (SNS). The second Mečiar coalition, in power from December 1994 to October 1998, was composed of the HZDS, the SNS, and the "neo-Stalinist" Workers' Association of Slovakia (ZRS).[18] Both SNS and ZRS assumed a lukewarm attitude toward the EU and a negative stance toward Slovakia's membership in NATO. Nevertheless, the declaratory policies of the Mečiar governments were in support of Slovakia's integration into NATO and the EU. The successive governmental programs and official declarations stressed the notion of Slovakia's belonging to the European space and its dedication to democratic norms of behavior. Slovakia started formulating its own foreign policy as early as 1992 when it became clear that Czechoslovakia would dissolve. The first comprehensive document, which included a section on foreign policy, was issued by the newly elected Mečiar government on July 16, 1992. The foreign policy goals listed in the document included presenting Slovakia abroad as a nation that "respects the European democratic political culture through its emancipation efforts."[19] The document also mentioned the Europe Agreements between the EC and Czechoslovakia, with the Agreements being viewed as binding on independent Slovakia by the Slovak government. The Declaration of Independence of the

[18] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 47.
[19] Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky* [Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic], 25.

Slovak Republic, issued by the Slovak National Council on July 17, 1992, made references to democratic principles, stating that Slovakia would "respect the rights of all, each individual, nations, national minorities and ethnic groups, democratic and humanistic heritage of Europe and the world."[20]

At his inauguration speech on March 2, 1993, President Kováč asserted that there was a need to demonstrate that Slovakia was a democratic country with a stable political regime and market economy. He referred to Slovakia as a country that "spiritually, culturally, and politically has belonged to Western Europe since the dawn of the Slovak history" and that is "an organic part of the Euro-Atlantic space stretching all the way to the Urals." Kováč also highlighted the importance of relations with the Czech Republic, Hungary, and the United States and advocated closer cooperation within the Visegrad Group as a means of supporting Slovakia's effort to incorporate Slovakia into the European "economic, security, and integration structures."[21]

The Slovak leadership embarked upon a political offensive to demonstrate the country's desire for integration into NATO and the EU immediately after Slovakia became an independent country. President Kováč traveled to the United States, where he met with President Bill Clinton. Prime Minister Mečiar went to Brussels in February 1993, where he visited both NATO Headquarters and the EU. Mečiar's trip resulted in positive feedback from the two institutions.[22] In April, the government issued the updated, post-independence version of its program. The government confirmed its desire to gain membership in the EC and to cooperate with NATO (and the WEU). As for NATO, the document stated that "In the event that NATO is prepared to enlarge its

[20] Ibid., 85.
[21] Kováč quoted in Ibid., 32.
[22] Ibid., 34.

security guarantees and admit new members, the Slovak Republic will be ready for membership."[23] This was followed by the submission of the application for NATO membership on November 4, 1994.[24] Finally, Slovakia and the EU signed (February 7, 1993) and ratified (November 1, 1993) the Association Agreements. The Agreements were signed by Vladimír Mečiar on October 4, 1993.[25]

However, the equivocal nature of Slovakia's Western orientation soon became apparent, with the Slovak leadership making advances to Russia. In March 1993, Foreign Minister Jozef Moravčík traveled to Moscow to meet with Russia's President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. According to Moravčík, his visit aimed at "creating the conditions for the attainment of the past level of economic relations. The improvement of relations with Russia will lead to a more intense interest on the part of Western nations in the Slovak Republic."[26] Moravčík's trip to Russia and his comments confirmed the idea of Slovakia serving as a "bridge between West and East," whereby Slovakia would become the platform for Western European trade with Russia and, by the same token, the guarantor of the transit of Russian oil and natural gas to Western Europe.[27] Moreover, in August 1993, President Kováč and President Yeltsin signed an agreement on cooperation between the two countries.

President Kováč countered the notion of an ambiguous Slovak foreign policy in his speech at NATO's North Atlantic Council in Brussels on November 4, 1993. He confirmed Slovakia's alignment with the Western community of states, arguing that Slovakia's membership in NATO was supported by both the public and "the consensus of

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[23] Ibid., 35-36.
[24] Samson, "Security Policy of the Slovak Republic," 22.
[25] Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky* [Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic], 35-36.
[26] Ibid., 34.
[27] Ibid., 34-35.

all political parties." At the same time, the reluctance in regard to full membership in NATO became apparent in Kováč's suggestion to create a temporary alternative to membership that would not include a full integration of the Slovak military into NATO. Kováč also asked the NATO representatives to approach the member countries of the Visegrad Group as a single geographic, strategic, and economic entity.[28]Slovakia's PfP membership was celebrated by the leadership as an important step toward future NATO membership. Following NATO's announcement of the PfP Program, delivered by President Clinton in Prague in January 1994, Prime Minister Mečiar stated the following regarding Slovakia's NATO aspirations: "The question is not if membership is a 'yes' or a 'no,' but it is now only about the timing and the way that this will happen."[29] Mečiar also stated that Slovakia's PfP membership was closely linked to Slovakia's dedication to democracy, human rights, and the rights of the minorities.

The rule of Vladimír Mečiar and his HZDS was briefly interrupted after the Mečiar coalition was ousted from power in February 1994 following a vote of no-confidence in the Slovak parliament. Mečiar's temporary demise was triggered by dissent from within the HZDS-SNS coalition, as deputies from both parties started to defect in protest against corruption, ethnic hatred, and botched economic reform. The fall of the Mečiar government was also precipitated by a speech by President Kováč on March 9, 1994, which was critical of the ruling coalition's disregard for the rule of law. Two days following the President's speech, Mečiar's government received a no-confidence vote and was replaced by a caretaker coalition government led by Jozef Moravčík, which remained in power until the September 1994 elections.

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[28] Ibid., 38.
[29] Ibid., 39.

The main goal of the Moravčík government, aside from taking the country to the early elections, was to reverse the negative developments in regard to relations with NATO and the EU by instituting various reforms to improve Slovakia's standing. Slovakia under the rule of the Moravčík government did, indeed, show "signs of returning to the mainstream of the developmental trajectory" of its Visegrad Group colleagues.[30] For example, the Moravčík government adopted the Military Doctrine of the Slovak Republic on June 30, 1994, in which it declared its intention to become a member of NATO. It also approved a new language law favorable to the Hungarian minority, launched the second wave of voucher privatization, and initiated economic reforms. However, the Moravčík government did not have a chance to prove that the reforms were working in the six months it was in power prior to the September 1994 elections. Moreover, the coalition weakened its chances to succeed in the elections by going into the elections as separate entities. This lack of unity left Mečiar's HZDS as "the most confident political force" in Slovakia. Combined with Mečiar's "fabulously populist" appeal, the HZDS, in coalition with the small Peasant Party, won the September 1994 elections with 35% of the vote.[31] The 1994 elections, then, resulted in the solidification of the dominant position of Mečiar and his party on the Slovak political scene.

Conflicting messages and policies continued to characterize the third Mečiar government, which was in power from December 1994 to September 1998. The rhetoric of the new Mečiar government was, once again, pro-Western and pro-integration, and it contained references to both norms and national interest, as demonstrated by the

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[30] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 47.
[31] Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, 243-244.

governmental declaration. The declaration, approved on January 20, 1995, opened with a foreign policy section, in which the government confirmed its desire to "adopt the existing policy of rapprochement between the Slovak Republic and the European and transatlantic political, security and economic institutions, intensify it and highlight our resolution to become a full-fledged part of these groupings." It also stated that membership was based on "historical traditions and natural relations." The government pledged to support these foreign policy goals while defending "the Slovak national and state interests."[32]

The declaration stated the following regarding the EU: "The systematic rapprochement with the European Union with the intent to gain full membership in around the year 2000 is the priority." The government committed itself to submit an application for membership by June 30, 1995 and to initiate preparations in the direction of integration in the economic, judicial, and other spheres to ensure that the country would "enter integration as an equal partner."[33] The Mečiar government fulfilled its pledge when it submitted its application for EU membership on June 27, 1995.[34]

The document referred to NATO as "the most effective existing security organization," with NATO membership representing "the most effective security guarantees."[35] The Mečiar government had no doubt that the country would become a member of NATO. This confidence was rooted in the notion of Slovakia's advantage with respect to its unique geopolitical position rather than a sense of common culture and

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[32] Government of the Slovak Republic, "Programové vyhlásenie vlády SR od 13. 12. 1994 do 30. 10. 1998" [Program Declaration of the Government of the Slovak Republic from 12/13/1994 till 10/30/1998], http://www-8.vlada.gov.sk/index.php?ID=1163 (accessed May 3, 2008).
[33] Ibid.
[34] European Commission, "Agenda 2000," 5.
[35] Government of the Slovak Republic, "Programové vyhlásenie vlády SR od 13. 12. 1994 do 30. 10. 1998" [Program Declaration of the Government of the Slovak Republic from 12/13/1994 till 10/30/1998].

identity.[36] Even though the program declaration of the government alluded to Slovakia's belonging, from a historical and cultural perspective, to the European democratic space, the government and especially Mečiar were more interested in geopolitical arguments. According to Mečiar, the Alliance considered Slovakia vital for its interests, as the country shared borders with all the other Visegrad Group countries. Mečiar stated the following regarding Slovakia's NATO prospects: "The citizens do not have to worry about whether they will accept us or not, because they need us, since we are geopolitically an exceptionally well-positioned country."[37] Clearly, Mečiar had overestimated the geopolitical importance of Slovakia and overplayed his hand when he argued that NATO and the EU needed Slovakia, as demonstrated by the exclusion of Slovakia from the 1999 NATO enlargement. Both NATO and the EU paid attention to the internal politics of the applicant countries along with geopolitical considerations.

Mečiar and his government continued to stress their pro-Western orientation through various public statements and declarations. Mečiar's first trip as the new Prime Minister led to Brussels where, once again, Mečiar reiterated his government's dedication to achieving NATO and EU membership for Slovakia. The submission of the application for membership at the EU Summit in Cannes marked another important step on Slovakia's road to integration. The application was submitted by Prime Minister Mečiar, and it was accompanied by a memorandum, in which Slovakia declared its commitment to fulfilling the political conditions of membership defined by the Copenhagen criteria.[38]

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[36] Krejčová, "Vliv národní identity na formování slovenského zahraničněpolitického postoje k NATO" [The Influence of national Identity on the Formation of the Slovak foreign policy approach to NATO], 8.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ivo Samson, "Slovakia: Misreading the Western Message," in *Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe: International and Transnational Factors*, ed. Jan Zielonka and Alex Pravda (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 366.

The fourteen-point memorandum depicted EU membership as a natural historical development for Slovakia and described Slovakia as a democratic state ready for membership with regard to institutions, rule of law, and the economy.[39] However, as the section on conditionality and compliance will demonstrate, the Mečiar government failed to translate its declarations into an effective policy of integration into NATO and the EU.

The Dzurinda Governments

Before discussing the programs of the two Dzurinda governments, it is necessary to take a closer look at the 1998 and 2002 parliamentary elections. In the 1998 elections, foreign policy, especially as related to NATO and EU enlargement, played a central role, and it helped propel the Mečiar opposition to power. The Mečiar opposition leveraged the 1997 rejection of Slovakia by NATO and the EU as one of the countries to start negotiations for membership to persuade the voters of the need for change. They used the EU and NATO criticism of the policies of the Mečiar government as the main theme of their electoral campaign, presenting themselves as the actors who would remedy the damage done by the Mečiar government to the international reputation of Slovakia and thus achieve NATO and EU membership. In the 2002 elections, the anti-Mečiar stance was, again, a prevalent theme, with the ruling Dzurinda coalition claiming its reelection would ensure the successful completion of the work done toward satisfying the conditions for NATO and EU membership. Both elections served to demonstrate the magnitude of the desire of Slovakia's pro-democratic and pro-integration political actors to overcome the negative legacy of the Mečiar years.

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[39] Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky* [Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic], 53.

Following the 1998 elections, a new government was formed under the leadership of Mikuláš Dzurinda. Even though Mečiar's HZDS won the largest share of votes, it failed to find a coalition partner with whom it could form a majority government. Mečiar's failure in coalition-building was directly related to NATO and EU pressure, discussed in greater detail below in the section on compliance. To preface this discussion, representatives of both NATO and the EU made it clear that if Mečiar were to become Prime Minister again, Slovakia would continue to be isolated by the transatlantic community. This pressure served to discourage any pro-Western party from entering into a coalition with Mečiar's HZDS. The Dzurinda government was composed of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), and the Party of Civic Understanding (SOP). Two of these — the SDK and the SMK — were, in fact, coalitions of parties. The Dzurinda government was, therefore, a heterogeneous one. It was a fragile coalition of parties from across the political spectrum that managed to hold together due only to the shared opposition to Mečiar and the desire to restore the country's reputation in the West.

To illustrate, the 1998 electoral program of the SDK blamed the Mečiar government for the failures of Slovak foreign policy vis-à-vis NATO and the EU. The coalition advocated fast entry into the EU and NATO, referring to the compliance with NATO accession conditions as "the entry" into other international organizations, such as the EU. Overall, the program called for proving to NATO and the EU the country's pro-Western leaning.[40] Similarly, the electoral program of the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) advocated Slovakia's NATO and EU memberships on the basis that these were the only mechanisms for securing the country's internal and external stability.

[40] Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky* [Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic], 93.

The two new parties that emerged prior to the 1998 elections, the party of the Democratic Left (SDL) and the party of Civic Understanding (SOP), were also staunch supporters of Slovakia's membership in NATO and the EU. The SDL criticized the ruling coalition for its misunderstanding of democracy and pledged its intention to "remove the doubts about the application of democracy" in Slovakia and to lead the country to EU membership in the same time-frame as the other Visegrad Group countries. The party also advocated NATO membership, arguing against "the individualistic and risky method of national security" and, instead, for collective security under the auspices of NATO, "the most efficient and the least costly assurance of security from a long-term perspective."[41] The SOP was also critical of the isolation of Slovakia on the international scene, and it announced a goal of "clear, trustworthy and convincing foreign policy" that would lead to NATO and EU membership.

The Dzurinda government was adamant about persuading NATO and the EU that Slovakia was a country oriented toward the West. Its goal was to implement measures so that Slovakia would catch up with its Visegrad Group neighbors who had, in the meantime, made significant progress in their integration efforts. In its program, the Dzurinda government claimed the following: "The Slovak foreign and security policy will be based on the fact that the preservation of our identity, sovereignty, external and internal security, and favorable conditions for the economic development of Slovakia is possible only in the framework of the European and transatlantic integration groupings."[42]

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[41] Ibid., 96.
[42] Krejčová, "Vliv národní identity na formování slovenského zahraničněpolitického postoje k NATO" [Influence of National Identity on the Formation of Slovak Foreign Policy Approach toward NATO], 13.

The 2002 elections confirmed the positive developments initiated by the 1998 elections. Even though the program of the HZDS for the 2002 elections contained a very positive outlook on NATO and the EU, the memory of the recent past was too vivid to lead to a belief that the HZDS had genuinely changed. As a result, the share of the vote of the HZDS dropped to 19.5%, the lowest in its history, in the 2002 elections. More importantly, the HZDS failed to emerge from the isolation imposed by the other parties and precipitated by NATO and EU pressure. As was the case with the 1998 elections, representatives from NATO and EU countries made it clear that the presence of Mečiar in the government would minimize the country's chances of membership. As a result, Mikuláš Dzurinda, for the second time in a row, created the winning coalition. The second Dzurinda government was again a coalition of center-right parties, namely the Slovak Democratic Christian Union (SDKU), the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), the Alliance of the New Citizen (ANO; until September 2005), and the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH; until February 2006). It was united by its opposition to Mečiar and a desire to make EU and NATO membership a reality. Its governmental program for the years 2002-2006 was introduced with the following statement:

> Historic moments are ahead for Slovakia. The government is determined and prepared – in cooperation with all citizens – to take decisive steps through which Slovakia will finally enter the society of European democracies and will become a member of the EU and NATO. Our program is a plan for Slovakia to use this big opportunity and adopt a dignified, respected, and responsible position.[43]

The government pledged to complete negotiations with the EU by 2002 in order to become a member state in 2004. It also stressed its intention to create favorable conditions for the administering of a successful referendum on the country's accession to

[43] Government of the Slovak Republic, "Programové vyhlásenie vlády Slovenskej republiky (od 16. 10. 2002 do 04. 07. 2006)" [Program Declaration of the Government of the Slovak Republic (from 16/10/2002 till 4/7/2006)], http://www-8.vlada.gov.sk/index.php?ID=918 (accessed May 3, 2008).

the EU. As for NATO, the document called membership in the Alliance, expected to be announced at the 2002 Prague Summit, "the strategic priority in the area of foreign and security policy."[44] As described in the section below, both the first and the second Dzurinda governments supported their declarations on the priority given to satisfying the conditions of NATO and EU membership by actual policies. They established both the normative and interest-driven base from which they reacted positively to NATO and EU conditionality. The relative ease with which the Dzurinda governments complied with NATO and EU conditionality is contrasted in the following section with the failures of the Mečiar governments.

FROM REJECTION TO MEMBERSHIP

The following section returns to the Slovak governments in power between 1993-2004 in order to emphasize the failure of NATO and EU conditionality vis-à-vis the Mečiar governments and the effects of "delayed conditionality" that eventually led to Mečiar's ouster from government and Slovakia's accession to NATO and the EU. The failure of conditionality is shown by examining the non-compliant policies and the wide divide that separated the official declarations of the Mečiar government regarding the country's NATO and EU membership from compliance.

The EU demarches and the NATO warnings, discussed in greater detail below, followed by the decision to exclude Slovakia from the first round of negotiations, had a negligible impact on the Mečiar government, which continued to take steps in the direction of the pursuit of interests that were inconsistent with compliance. Nevertheless, the effects of the NATO and EU pressure came to be felt as a result of the effects giving

[44] Ibid.

the anti-Mečiar coalition an impetus to join forces in the 1998 elections, to reject Mečiar and his HZDS as a coalition partner, and to maintain the coalition for the full four-year term despite the tensions within this very diverse coalition. This delayed conditionality also played a role in the 2002 elections when, once again, Mečiar and his party were deemed "untouchable" with respect to forming a coalition. The effects of NATO and EU conditionality where, then, channeled through the leadership that defined its stance as one of opposition to Mečiar and compliance with the conditions for NATO and EU membership.

The Mečiar Government and the Failure of EU and NATO Conditionality

The third Mečiar government, which was in power from December 1994 to September 1998, was composed of Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), the Slovak National Party (SNS), and the far-left Association of Workers of Slovakia. The coalition had a dominant position in the parliament, with 83 of the total of 150 seats in the Slovak National Council.[45] As early as 1994, it became apparent that Mečiar was "more interested in building party power than in establishing either effective democratic institutions or legal norms" and that his coalition "had opted for a self-serving rule that would grow increasingly kleptocratic and authoritarian in its abuse and monopolisation of state power." [46] The Mečiar government failed to uphold "many of the principles of democratic political life, such as tolerance, compromise, negotiation, and the need to respect the rights of opponents and minorities."[47] The party leaders attempted to limit their opponents' rights of expression and to manipulate the political system in

[45] Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, 244-445.
[46] Ibid., 220.
[47] Wolchik, "Democratization and Political Participation in Slovakia," 231.

ways to ensure their continuation in power. With Mečiar being in control of the parliament and, thus of legislation, the only actors capable of preventing Mečiar from abusing his power were the president and the Constitutional Court. President Michal Kováč's attempts to constrain the government were met by Mečiar's "radical campaign of intimidation and media attacks."[48] As for the Constitutional Court, the Mečiar government disregarded its rulings on his government's breaches of the constitution.

The Slovak democratic deficit was reflected in many different ways, most notably in the methods with which the Mečiar government tried to neutralize the opposition and control the state, the conflictual relationship between Prime Minister Mečiar and President Michal Kováč, and the treatment of the minorities. The policies of the two Mečiar governments, described below in greater detail, contradicted the official declarations on adherence to democracy and the desire to enter NATO and the EU. By the same token, these policies represented affronts to the democratic conditions for NATO and EU membership. The two institutions attempted to influence the developments in Slovakia by issuing official and unofficial statements criticizing the activities of the Mečiar government. The institutional pressure was, however, disregarded by Mečiar, who continued to pursue policies aimed at solidifying his position of power.

Mečiar vs Opposition

The Mečiar government took decisive steps to secure its position from the very beginning of its renewed rule following the early elections of September 1994. The government discriminated against the opposition by not giving any parliamentary functions or chairmanships of parliamentary committees to the representatives of non-

[48] Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, 245.

coalition parties. During the first session of the government in November 1994, the government also replaced the personnel in charge of 38 key institutions with their loyalists.[49] These institutions included, for example, the Special Oversight Board that monitored the works of the intelligence services; the National Property Fund, which was to oversee the sale of state property; the Attorney General; and bodies supervising public broadcasting services, namely the Slovak Television and the Slovak Radio.[50] Some of these acts were unconstitutional. For example, according to the Slovak constitution, the Attorney General can be removed from office only by the president.

Mečiar and his allies also violated the rules of parliamentary mandate in their efforts to sideline the opposition and to prevent dissent within HZDS. For example, in October 1994, Mečiar and his coalition partners tried to force 15 members of the Democratic Union (DU) party, led by Josef Moravčík, and several HZDS deputies who were insufficiently loyal to Mečiar out of the Parliament. Similarly, Mečiar was adamant about stymieing dissent within the party, as illustrated by the case of František Gaulieder, a founding member of the HZDS. Gaulieder decided to resign from the party in November 1996, following his declaration that the HZDS was "striving to seize power in order to dominate the society at the whim of Mečiar."[51] The HZDS replaced Gaulieder in the parliament with another HZDS member, even though Gaulieder was adamant about keeping his mandate. Despite the ruling by the Constitutional Court that confirmed

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[49] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], 183.
[50] Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*, 245.
[51] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 48.

Gaulieder's right to a parliamentary mandate, the parliament disregarded the ruling and voted against Gaulieder's remaining in the parliament.[52]

Mečiar vs President Kováč

President Michal Kováč was in office from March 1993 to March 1998. Even though he had been one of the founding members, together with Mečiar, of the HZDS, soon after assuming the presidency, he presented himself both as an apolitical figure and as a strong opponent of the Mečiar coalition's grip on power. The Kováč-Mečiar rivalry started with the above-mentioned March 1994 speech by Kováč on the state of the country, which was followed by a no-confidence vote in the Parliament. Mečiar responded by attacking Kováč on multiple fronts in an effort to force him to step down.

For example, the parliament investigated an allegation that President Kováč was involved in Mečiar's ouster from the government in March 1994, and it passed a nonbinding vote of no-confidence in President Kováč in May 1995. Moreover, the budget of the President's Office was cut significantly throughout Mečiar's premiership, leading to staff reductions and a scaling back of activities.[53] The budget dropped from SKK 159.7 million in 1994 to SKK 93.5 million in 1997. Similarly, there were 116 staff members in the Office of the President in 1994 but only 50 in 1997.[54] Furthermore, the ever more complicated relations between the Office of the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs meant that President Kováč did not go on a single official bilateral visit abroad in 1995. Moreover, members of the government as well as parliament often refused to

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[52] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], 184-5.
[53] Wolchik, "Democratization and Political Participation in Slovakia," 231.
[54] Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky* [Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic], 64.

attend the same official functions as the president.[55] While the acts on the part of the government were not illegal, they were an affront to democratic principles.

The most scandalous example of the attacks on the president was the kidnapping of his son, Michal Kováč Jr., on August 31, 1995. Kováč junior was kidnapped and taken to Germany. The investigation that followed showed that the kidnapping was organized and administered by the Slovak secret police (the SIS), which was led by an associate of Mečiar's, Ivan Lexa. The SIS under Lexa's leadership turned into "a tool for coercion, discreditation and intimidation directed against not only some opposition politicians, but also against journalists and even representatives of the church hierarchy."[56]

The most flagrant attack, which caught the attention of the EU and, particularly, NATO, was the manipulation by the Mečiar government of the May 1997 referendum on the direct election of the president and Slovakia's membership in NATO. The referendum took place in response to a petition organized by anti-Mečiar elements concerned about the possibility of Mečiar assuming the powers of the president in the event that the parliament were to fail to elect a new president following the end of Kováč's term. The Mečiar government decided to use the referendum as an opportunity improve its standing by adding a question on Slovakia's accession to NATO. Mečiar was counting on a win-win situation, and he assumed the following two-prong strategy: carrying out the referendum on NATO membership and achieving a positive result would demonstrate, according to Mečiar, a high level of democracy in Slovakia, which would encourage NATO to invite Slovakia to start membership negotiations in the first wave of applicants. This would, in turn, improve the government's standing. A "no" vote would also be good

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[55] Ibid., 57.
[56] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], 187.

for the Mečiar government, since it would provide it with an excuse for its policies that were criticized by NATO. Mečiar stressed the importance of public opinion with regard to NATO membership by stating that "the will of the citizens must be sacred. If they say yes, the government will execute it. If they say no, the government has to conform."[57]

President Kováč set the date for a referendum that was to contain the questions regarding the direct election of the president and NATO membership. However, the Ministry of Interior ordered the removal of the question on the election of president, which led to calls for the boycotting of the referendum on the part of the opposition. In the end, the referendum was deemed invalid, as only 10% of the eligible population cast their votes. The fiasco had both domestic and international repercussions. The parliament failed to reelect Kováč president, and the presidential powers fell into the hands of Prime Minister Mečiar. He then used these powers to cancel a new referendum on the direct election of the president scheduled by Kováč for April 1998 and to give amnesty to those persons involved in the decision to take the question out of the initial referendum. On the international level, the failed referendum led to Slovakia's rejection by NATO and the EU as a first-wave candidate for accession negotiations.

Mečiar vs Minorities

Both the Czech Republic and Slovakia encountered difficulties in satisfying NATO and EU conditionality related to minority rights. In the Czech Republic, as described in the previous two chapters, the issue concerned the Roma minority. In Slovakia, the issue was related to both the Roma and Hungarian minorities. The

[57] Mečiar quoted in Krejčová, "Vliv národní identity na formování slovenského zahraničněpolitického postoje k NATO" [Influence of National Identity on the Formation of Slovak Foreign Policy Approach toward NATO], 10.

Hungarian issue generally had more visibility than the Roma problem. The Hungarian minority population, concentrated primarily in the southern part of the country along the border with Hungary, is about 570,000, which represents 10.6% of the population.[58] The Hungarian minority was also politically well-organized and vocal, and it received support from Budapest. Some of the main sticking points included the absence of the Hungarian political parties from the government and several controversial legislative proposals aimed at discriminating against the Hungarian minority, primarily in the area of the language law and the penal code.[59]

The historical resentment toward Hungary was translated into the perception of Hungary as a threat to the new Slovak state by the Slovak nationalists. The relations between the Slovak majority and the Hungarian minority were strained by the nationalist sentiment expressed by some political actors, namely the Slovak National Party (SNS) and the HZDS. These two parties used anti-Hungarian rhetoric in an effort to present themselves as the proponents of the Slovak identity and the Slovak interest.[60] Even though the Mečiar government signed the "Treaty on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation" between Slovakia and Hungary in March 1995—an action perceived as a prerequisite to NATO membership—the attacks against the Hungarian minority did not subside.[61] For example, in response to the Hungarian minority's criticism of the language law, Mečiar announced that if the Hungarians living in Slovakia were not satisfied with the conditions in Slovakia, they should move to Hungary.[62] Mečiar went as far to suggest

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[58] Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 116.
[59] For a detail discussion of the discriminatory legislation proposals, see Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, esp. Chapter 6.
[60] Ibid., 117.
[61] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 57.
[62] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 30.

in 1997 a "population exchange" to "facilitate the voluntary migration of ethnic Hungarians from Slovakia to Hungary and Hungary's Slovak minority to Slovakia."[63] Ján Slota, the leader of the Slovak National Party (SNS), received coverage of his racist remarks directed against the Hungarian minority. He called the Hungarians "a cancer in the body of the Slovak nation"[64] and "evil people who killed many of our fathers and mothers."[65]

Several members of the Slovak political elite openly expressed xenophobic opinions regarding the Roma, the second largest minority group in Slovakia, with a population officially estimated at 90,000.[66] Vladimír Mečiar, for example, made the following statement in regard to the question of how Slovakia should treat its Roma minority: "If we don't deal with them, they will deal with us."[67] Furthermore, he suggested in an August 1998 speech that the Roma should do only "intellectually modest work" and that "Slovaks produce first rate values, Romanies only themselves."[68] Similarly, Ján Slota, the leader of the SNS, the ally of Mečiar, and the mayor of the city of Žilina argued the following in March 1998: "In no case shall we agree that there is a Romany nationality. That is absolutely rubbish. They are Gypsies, who steal, plunder, and loot."[69] In short, the rhetoric as well as the policies of the Mečiar government in the

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[63] Mečiar quoted in Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe*, 117.
[64] Stephan Orth, Nadine Michel, and Maike Jansen, "Separatist Movements Seek Inspiration in Kosovo," *Spiegel Online*, February 22, 2008, http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,537008-2,00.html (accessed May 5, 2008).
[65] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], 221.
[66] The unofficial estimate is up to 400,000; Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*, ed. Charles Krupnick (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 54.
[67] Mečiar quoted in Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 29.
[68] Ibid., 47, ft. 32.
[69] Slota quoted in Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 47, ft. 32.

area of minority rights continued to defy the calls by NATO and the EU to protect minority rights.

Mečiar vs NATO and EU Conditionality

The activities of the Mečiar government did not go unnoticed by NATO, the EU, and the individual member states. On November 22, 1994, the EU issued a demarche in response to the newly-established Mečiar government's efforts to control the key Slovak institutions. In the demarche, the EU expressed its concern regarding the violations of constitutional and minority rights. Mečiar tried to lessen the negative impact of the demarche by declaring it a sign of positive interest in Slovakia on the part of the EU.[70]

Similarly, the EU reacted negatively to Mečiar's attacks on the president and to his efforts to control the opposition. On October 25, 1995, the EU issued a demarche in which it criticized the government for undemocratic attacks on the president and for institutional tensions. The demarche also stated that no changes had been made toward improving the state of Slovak democracy since the previous demarche, issued in November 1994. Two days later, the United States issued a demarche where it expressed its disappointment with the state of Slovak democracy. Finally, on November 17, the European Parliament issued a resolution, one which was more detailed than the two preceding demarches, and it touched upon many problematic issues, such as the pressure on the president, violations of minority rights, insufficient freedom of the press, and the lack of opposition deputies in government offices. The demarche stated that if Slovakia continued to violate democratic principles, the EU would consider terminating the aid programs included in the Association Agreements. The Mečiar government rejected the

[70] Ibid., 52.

EP demarche, stating that it had not been consulted on the issues raised in the document and calling it an "illegitimate unilateral act."[71]

The EU reacted also to deputy Gaulieder's loss of his parliamentary mandate as a result of the vote in the parliament. On December 12, 1996, the European Parliament adopted a resolution in which it affirmed that Gaulieder's loss of mandate was contrary to the principles of the Association Agreement. Moreover, the United States, represented by the speaker of the State Department (James B. Foley), criticized the Mečiar government for disregarding the Constitutional Court and violating Gaulieder's rights.[72]

The NATO referendum had an especially negative impact on Slovakia's integration hopes. It triggered a series of criticisms from abroad, and it solidified the negative evaluation of Slovakia by NATO and the EU. The then EU commissioner for enlargement, Hans van den Broek, expressed the European Commission's disappointment, adding that the concern on the part of the Commission was "shared by all 15 members of the EU as well as the United States."[73] Thus, NATO excluded Slovakia from the group of countries that would start accession negotiations with the Alliance at the July 1997 Madrid Summit. Similarly to NATO, the EU adopted measures aimed at demonstrating its disapproval with the developments in Slovakia. In July 1997, the European Commission issued Agenda 2000, which contained the evaluation of the candidates' progress towards the fulfillment of the Copenhagen Criteria.[74] The so-called Regular Report was relatively positive in regard to the economic reforms, stating that

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[71] Ibid., 61.
[72] Juraj Marušiak, Juraj Alner, Pavol Lukáč, Rudolf Chmel, Ivo Samson, and Alexander Duleba, "The Foreign Policy and National Security of the Slovak Republic," in *Slovakia 1998-1999: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Grigorij Mesežnikov, Michal Ivantyšyn, and Tom Nicholson (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1999), 171.
[73] Murad, *Zahraniční politika Slovenské republiky* [Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic], 69.
[74] European Commission, "Agenda 2000."

"Slovakia has introduced most of the reforms necessary to establish a market economy."[75] It was also optimistic in regard to Slovakia's capacity to adopt the *acquis* in the future. However, the Commission was very critical in its evaluation of Slovakia's progress towards the fulfillment of the political criteria of membership:

> ...while the institutional framework defined by the Slovak Constitution corresponds to that of a parliamentary democracy with free and fair elections, the situation with regard to the stability of the institutions and their integration into political life is unsatisfactory. Despite recommendations made by the European Union on the occasion of a number of approaches and statements, there has been no appreciable improvement.[76]

The Commission pointed to the lack of respect on the part of the government for the Constitution, the sidelining of the opposition, the improper uses made of the police and the secret services by the government, and the tensions between the government and the president as the key problems. It also called for "better guarantees of the independence of the judicial system and of satisfactory conditions for its operation" and for improvement in the treatment of the Hungarian and Roma minorities.[77] As a result of the shortcomings in the fulfillment of these political criteria, the Commission recommended that Slovakia not be invited to start accession negotiations: "...the Commission concludes that Slovakia does not fulfil in a satisfying manner the political conditions set out by the European Council in Copenhagen, because of the instability of Slovakia's institutions, their lack of rootedness in political life and the shortcomings in the functioning of its democracy."[78] The Commission recommended that the EU open negotiations with Slovakia "as soon as it has made sufficient progress in satisfying the

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[75] Ibid., 43.
[76] Ibid., 23.
[77] Ibid., 23.
[78] Ibid., 130.

conditions of membership..."[79] The December 1997 Luxembourg summit confirmed the negative view of Slovakia by the EU. At the summit, the EU split the candidates into two groups, one with which negotiations would commence and another whose members would have to wait. Slovakia was in the second group.

As this discussion demonstrates, the institutional pressure of NATO and the EU failed to achieve the desired effect in Slovakia under Mečiar. The Mečiar government denied responsibility for Slovakia's foreign policy failures, instead blaming others—namely the president, the opposition, and the media—for these failures. Nevertheless, conditionality worked in a delayed fashion by providing the Mečiar opposition with the necessary impetus to unite prior to the 1998 elections, to stay in power for the full four-year term, and to repeat the electoral victory in 2002. Beginning in 1998, then, NATO and EU conditionality marked success, as the post-Mečiar leadership made great progress toward fulfillment of NATO and EU conditions.

Delayed Conditionality and the Dzurinda Governments

The fall from power of Vladimír Mečiar serves as a clear example of NATO and EU conditionality at work. Mečiar was "jettisoned...in part because of EU criticism of his undemocratic policies and also because the EU made it clear that it would not deal with him."[80] Mečiar's steps to solidify his power had an effect that was the opposite of that which he intended. The negative impact of Mečiar's authoritarian rule and the criticism on the part of NATO and the EU led to the consolidation of the Mečiar opposition. The opposition efforts gained momentum after the May 1997 referendum

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[79] Ibid., 130.
[80] Tupy, "EU Enlargement: Costs, Benefits, and Strategies for Central and Eastern European Countries," 13.

fiasco, in which the question of NATO membership was not decided. The opposition also consolidated as a result of the Mečiar government changing the electoral law in an attempt to make it more difficult for coalitions to win the percentage of votes necessary to enter parliament. Four months prior to the 1998 elections, the Mečiar government approved a new electoral law, which disadvantaged coalitions by instituting a rule that required that each party within a coalition had to win a minimum of 5% of the vote in order for the coalition to enter parliament. This move was clearly directed against Dzurinda's Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK) and the coalition of Hungarian parties. Moreover, the law banned the use of private electronic media in the campaign, which further disadvantaged the opposition, since Mečiar and his HZDS controlled the state media and used them to their advantage.[81] In short, the new electoral law was a violation of democratic principles, as it had a negative impact on the competitive nature of the elections. Nevertheless, the opposition managed to overcome the obstacles and to garner the largest number of votes after Mečiar's HZDS.

Even though the HZDS won the 1998 elections with the largest percentage of votes (26.3%), it failed to find a coalition partner to secure a majority government. A new coalition government was then formed by Mikuláš Dzurinda's SDK party. It was composed of all the parties that had entered parliament, with the exception of the HZDS and the SNS. This coalition, whose members came from across the political spectrum, demonstrated the strength of the people's determination to establish a democratic Slovakia.

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[81] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia], 188-189.

The first Dzurinda government, composed of the SDK, the SDL, the SMK, and the SOP, was in power from 1998 to 2002, and had a clear parliamentary majority, which enabled it to make the drastic changes needed to reverse the course set by the Mečiar government. These changes were directed not only at stabilizing the domestic political setting, but also at persuading NATO and the EU that the Mečiar rule was an exception rather than the rule in Slovak political life. The Dzurinda coalition was unstable, but it survived the full four-year term. Anti-Mečiarism served as an impetus to overcome divisions and strike compromises. The coalition parties wanted to stay in power, and, at the same time, they were determined to prevent Mečiar's HZDS from hurting the country's improving reputation. A deep commitment to the priorities of the government, namely, the strengthening of democracy and the achieving of membership in NATO and the EU, helped maintain the unity of the coalition.

The first Dzurinda government concentrated on fulfilling the political conditions of NATO and EU membership, as the failure to do that represented the main reason why NATO and the EU refused closer integration with Slovakia in 1997. In fact, the government declared it would fulfill the EU political criteria within 100 days of its inauguration.[82] The aim was to address the deficiencies that had existed under Mečiar's rule in order to attain parity with the Central and Eastern European countries invited to start NATO and EU negotiations. The Dzurinda government replaced the whimsical and self-serving decision-making of the Mečiar government with rule of law, clearly defined its pro-Western leaning, promptly implemented measures to improve relations with the Hungarian minority and minority rights generally, and instituted economic reforms.

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[82] Marek Rybář, "EU Political Conditionality and the Accession of Slovakia," 95, http://www.eplc.gr/docs/Themis_Project/M.%20RYBAR,%20EU%20Political%20Conditionality%20and%20the%20Accession%20of%20Slovakia.pdf (accessed April 28, 2008).

In an effort to improve its standing in the NATO and EU accession process, the government concentrated on strengthening the position of Slovakia's Hungarian and Roma community in Slovak society. The Dzurinda government discarded nationalistic discourse and appointed Pal Csaky, the representative of the Hungarian parties, as the deputy prime minister. The government also revised the language law in July 1999, allowing for the use of Hungarian as an official language in areas where the Hungarians formed at least 20% of the population. In June 2001, the government confirmed the European standard of 20% by ratifying the "European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages."[83] The government also supported and financed Hungarian language schools and Hungarian cultural and television programs. Furthermore, the government resolved the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric dam issue through international arbitration.[84] As for the Roma issue, the government reversed the trend of using the media to spread hatred against the Roma minority and instead implemented programs to foster interethnic tolerance, such as roundtable discussions on Roma issues. It also allocated funds for Roma programs and education.[85]

The Dzurinda coalition also set an unambiguously pro-Western foreign policy, declaring NATO and EU membership to be the primary goals of its foreign policy. It reversed the importance that the Mečiar government placed on relations with Russia and instead initiated substantive policy shifts toward NATO and EU membership. To illustrate, within the government's first months in office, the highest representatives of

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[83] Krupnick and Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," 56.
[84] The construction of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric dam commenced in 1977. Hungary terminated its participation in 1992, but Czechoslovakia and later independent Slovakia continued in the construction on the Slovak side, eventually leading to diverting water from the Danube to a new canal. This caused serious tensions between Bratislava and Budapest.
[85] Krupnick and Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," 54-55.

the Dzurinda government undertook ten official visits to Brussels and important Western nations in an effort to strengthen Slovakia's bid for integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutions.[86] Prime Minister Dzurinda himself participated in 35 bilateral visits to EU member states in his first year in office.[87] Similarly, in a step confirming the paramount importance of Slovakia's relations with the West, the Slovak leadership ended the Mečiar-era arrangement under which Slovakia accepted Russian armaments to pay off the Warsaw pact debt in the spring of 1999.[88] This was followed in 2001 by the imposition of visa restrictions on Russia.[89]

Compliance with NATO Conditionality

The first Dzurinda government increased practical cooperation with NATO in an effort to demonstrate its commitment. The desire to join NATO was rooted in the realization that there was a lack of alternatives for the country with respect to security guarantees and resources. The desirability of NATO membership was expressed very clearly by the then deputy prime minister Pavol Hamzik, who stated the following in 2000:

> We were part of the Warsaw Pact; that was dissolved. Now we are nowhere; we are alone, left on our own…we believe this [NATO] is and will be the future of collective security arrangements. We do it because it's in our interest. We do it because we do not have enough resources, and alone we have no possibility to have a military on the level which is needed today. I believe this collective way of securing our security is the best way.[90]

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[86] Krejčová, "Vliv národní identity na formování slovenského zahraničněpolitického postoje k NATO" [Influence of National Identity on the Formation of Slovak Foreign Policy Approach toward NATO], 13.
[87] Tim Haughton, "What Does the Case of Slovakia Tell us about the EU's Active Leverage?," (paper presented at the EUSA Tenth Biennale International Conference, Montreal, Canada, May 17-19, 2007): 5, http://www.unc.edu/euce/eusa2007/papers/haughton-t-10c.pdf (accessed April 28, 2008).
[88] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 60.
[89] Krupnick and Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," 61.
[90] Ibid., 73.

In November 1998, the Prime Minister traveled to Brussels to speak to the North Atlantic Council about Slovakia's desire to join the Alliance, and stated the following: "...I may declare resolutely and with all responsibility that NATO membership is considered by the Slovak Republic as the main priority of its security policy and thus one of the priorities of its foreign policy..."[91] Unlike the premiership of Vladimír Mečiar, where pro-integration declarations were not matched with corresponding actions, the Dzurinda government took steps to fulfill the NATO accession conditions. These steps included reforming the Slovak military, cooperating with NATO within the PfP program, participating in peacekeeping operations, and providing support to operations led by NATO and NATO member-states, namely the Kosovo campaign and the operations in Afghanistan.

One of the major reforms needed with respect to the armed forces was the issuance of an updated doctrine that clearly delineated Slovakia's pro-NATO stance. The process started with the approval of the National Program for Preparation for NATO Membership (NP PRENAME) in June 1999. The Program was closely aligned with NATO's Membership Action Plan (MAP), which was adopted by the Alliance at the 1999 Washington Summit as a mechanism of "advice, assistance and practical support tailored to the individual needs of countries wishing to join the Alliance."[92] The Program stressed Slovakia's interest in joining NATO, stating that even though Slovakia was not a de jure member, it would "continue to behave as a de facto member of the Alliance."[93] Based on the Program, the Government Committee for the Preparation for NATO

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[91] Ibid., 67.
[92] NATO, "Membership Action Plan (MAP)," *Topics*, http://www.nato.int/issues/map/index.html (accessed May 28, 2008).
[93] Jiří Šedivý, *Dilema rozšiřování NATO* [The Dilemma of NATO Enlargement] (Prague: Institute of International Relations, 2001), 56.

Membership was created. The Committee represented "an entirely new, complex, inter-agency approach to security" by bringing together cabinet members and experts to coordinate preparations for membership.[94]

The interagency and interministeral cooperation led to the adoption of the Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic by the Slovak National Council on March 27, 2001.[95] The document was endorsed almost unanimously, with 102 deputies out of the 117 deputies present voting in favor. The "no" votes came from members of the Slovak National Party (SNS), which, by then, was the only major party opposing Slovakia's membership in the Alliance.[96] The approval of the Security Strategy was hailed by the Dzurinda government as an important signal to NATO of the ability of Slovak leadership to put their differences aside and present a unified front on this important issue.[97] The timing of the document was also important, with the government hoping to implement reforms based on the Security Strategy prior to the November 2002 NATO Summit in Prague, where further enlargement was to be announced.

The document referred to Slovakia as "an inseparable part of the Euro-Atlantic civilization and cultural environment" based on its "historical, cultural, political, geographical, economic and other linkages."[98] More importantly, it highlighted Slovakia's inability to provide for its own security as a result of the country being one of the "smaller European countries who lack certain energy sources and raw materials."[99]

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[94] Mário Nicolini, "Slovakia One Year after NATO Entry," 6.
[95] Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, "Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic," March 27, 2001, http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?id=15139&lng=en (accessed May 25, 2008).
[96] Robin Sheeran, "News from Slovakia: MPs Support NATO Membership," *Central Europe Review* 3, no. 13 (April 2, 2001), http://www.ce-review.org/01/13/slovakianews13.html (accessed May 25, 2008).
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, "Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic," 2.
[99] Ibid., 2

Consequently, the document designated NATO as "the optimum variant of attainment of effective security guarantees" and as the guarantor of "security, stability and prosperity in Europe and in the entire Euro-Atlantic area, for the present as well as the future."[100] The primacy of relations with NATO (and the EU) becomes even more apparent in the document's description of the nature of Slovakia's relations with Russia: "Co-operation with the Russian Federation and with the other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States will be realized on the basis of mutually advantageous partnership relations in harmony with the integration ambitions of the Slovak Republic."[101]

According to security experts, the Slovak Security Strategy was "an excellent, modern-styled and analytically comprehensive document."[102] It represented a roadmap for "an all-out effort on the part of the political leadership to integrate successfully and meaningfully into NATO while recognizing very realistically the difficulties that have to be overcome and the severely limited financial resources available for adjusting and improving the armed forces."[103] Based on the Security Strategy as well as the more detailed Defense Strategy (approved in May 2001) and the Military Strategy (approved in October 2001),[104] the Dzurinda government started implementing important reforms in an effort to secure an invitation for NATO membership in 2002. These reforms included, primarily, reducing the armed forces and transforming them to better fit the post-Cold War security environment and the responsibilities of NATO membership; modernizing the military by way of replacing Russian systems with Western systems in order to

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[100] Ibid., 9, 6.
[101] Ibid., 7.
[102] Drent et al., "Organising National Defences for NATO Membership," 81.
[103] Ibid., 81-82.
[104] Jeffrey Simon, *NATO and the Czech and Slovak Republics: A Comparative Study in Civil-Military Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 245.

achieve interoperability with other NATO nations' militaries; strengthening civilian control of the military; changing the military curriculum from a Soviet-style to a Western-style curriculum; and instituting English-language training for members of the military.[105]

The 1999 Kosovo crisis served as the ultimate proof of Slovakia's pro-Western foreign policy orientation. The eagerness on the part of the Slovak leadership to allow for the transit of NATO forces through the Slovak territory and airspace turned the country into a "virtual member" of the Alliance.[106] The support of the Slovak elites is especially significant in light of the pro-Serbian stance of Russia and the opposition to the NATO bombing campaign on the part of the Slovak public (described in greater detail below). The aim, of course, was to strengthen Slovakia's bid for membership. Slovakia's support was rewarded by "spontaneous applause at NATO Headquarters in Brussels" and by the Slovak Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan becoming the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in the Balkans.[107] Slovakia was also forthcoming in offering assistance in the wake of the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, again opening its airspace and granting landing rights to U.S. and, later, NATO aircraft. Moreover, in August 2002, Slovakia deployed 40 engineers to Afghanistan in support of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom.[108] In short, the Dzurinda coalition was eager to demonstrate its pro-NATO stance by the active participation of Slovakia in various

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[105] Personnel were to be reduced from 45,000 in 1999 to 30,000 in 2002. For detailed information on the reforms of the Slovak armed forces by the first Dzurinda government, see Simon, *NATO and the Czech and Slovak Republics*, particularly chapters 16 and 17.
[106] Šedivý, *Dilema rozšiřování NATO*, 32.
[107] The Slovak Republic Government Office, Mikuláš Dzurinda, Speech at Charles University (Prague, July 24, 1999), http://www.government.gov.sk/english/aktuality_start.php3?id_ele=1109 (accessed May 28, 2008).
[108] Simon, *NATO and the Czech and Slovak Republics*, 241.

NATO, U.S., and UN-led peacekeeping missions and operations. This trend continued under the second Dzurinda government (2002-2006).

Compliance with EU Conditionality

Slovakia under the leadership of the Dzurinda coalition also implemented measures to comply with EU conditionality. The implementation was aided by the creation of the European Commission-Slovakia High Level Working Group. This "unique institutional tool" aimed to help Slovakia attain parity with its Visegrad Group neighbors through closer coordination with the EU.[109] Its members met five times between November 1998 and September 1999. Besides taking steps to resolve the ethnic tensions described above, the government embarked on economic reforms as a means of achieving EU membership. In the economic sector, the Dzurinda government worked toward reversing many of the decisions of the Mečiar era, such as those related to privatization projects where Mečiar and his cronies "privatized industrial firms (and later banks) to themselves and their managerial allies at symbolic prices through a politicized and non-transparent administrative process."[110] The Dzurinda government implemented austerity measures and financial restructuring programs, such as the reduction of government expenditures and the modification of the tax law. It also placed great importance on reforming the privatization process and attracting foreign investment. As a result of these measures, the Slovak economy grew. The amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) flowing into the country during this time serves to illustrate the growth and the positive impact of the reforms. In 1997, Slovakia attracted mere $78.5 million of

[109] Haughton, "What Does the Case of Slovakia Tell us about the EU's Active Leverage?," 5.
[110] Krupnick and Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," 53.

FDI, compared to $1.3 billion for the Czech Republic. In 2002, FDI in Slovakia reached $4.1 billion.[111]

The period between 1999 and 2002 also marked a high level of activity on the part of the ruling coalition in adopting legislation and administrative processes to conform to the *acquis* and to attain parity with those countries that had been negotiating with the EU since 1998. Besides the advances in minority rights described above, the government approved (in February 2001) a key bill enabling the reform of the civil service and instituting the division of power between central and local government, both of which were important steps toward NATO and EU membership.[112] It also amended the constitution to reinforce the country's democratic character by, among other things, strengthening the position of the constitutional court and creating the post of a public defender of human rights.

As a result of this activity, the evaluations by the European Commissions became ever more positive. To illustrate, the 1999 Regular Report concluded that Slovakia fulfilled, as a result of the changes introduced since the 1998 Regular Report, the Copenhagen political criteria.[113] Based on this favorable report, the European Council meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 decided to invite Slovakia, together with the other countries of the so-called Luxembourg group, to start negotiations for membership. This decision was welcomed by the Dzurinda government as a confirmation of the EU's recognition that the era of undemocratic government in Slovakia had ended.

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[111] NationMaster, "Economy Statistics - Foreign direct investment, net," http://www.nationmaster.com (accessed May 27, 2008).
[112] Barany, *The Future of NATO Expansion*, 50-51.
[113] European Commission, "1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress toward Accession" (October 13, 1999), http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1999/slovakia_en.pdf (accessed June 1, 2008).

The 2000 and 2001 Regular Reports also reflected the EU's positive view of the activities of the Dzurinda government. In the 2000 Report, the Commission confirmed that Slovakia "continues to meet the political criteria for accession... Slovakia has further advanced in the consolidation of its democratic system and in the normal functioning of its institutions."[114] The 2001 report reflected Slovakia's success in catching up with its Visegrad Group partners by having opened all 29 chapters of the *acquis*.[115] The 2001 Regular Report praised the country for making "considerable progress in further consolidating and deepening the stability of its institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities."[116] The report also highlighted Slovakia's achievements in the areas of macroeconomic stability, independence of the judiciary, and constitutional reforms in support of improved institutional structures relating to the protection of minority rights.

NATO and EU Conditionality and the 2002 Parliamentary Elections

The September 2002 parliamentary elections serve as an extraordinary example of the workings of NATO and EU membership conditionality: "Rarely has a domestic political agenda been so closely intertwined with the issue of European integration, since both the EU and NATO had clearly warned that Mečiar's return to power would jeopardize Slovakia's chances to be part of the forthcoming enlargement of the two

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[114] European Commission, "2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Slovakia's Progress toward Accession" (November 8, 2000): 22, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2000/sk_en.pdf (accessed June 1, 2008).
[115] Martin Bútora, Zora Bútorová and Grigorij Mesežnikov, "Slovakia's Democratic Awakening," in *The Road to the European Union: The Czech and Slovak Republics*, ed. Jacques Rupnik and Jan Zielonka (Manchester, UK; New York, NY, USA: Manchester University Press; Palgrave, 2003), 64.
[116] European Commission, "2001 Regular Report on Slovakia's Progress toward Accession" (November 13, 2001): 24, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/2001/sk_en.pdf (accessed June 1, 2008).

institutions."[117] Once again, though Mečiar's HZDS won the largest percentage of the vote, it failed to find a coalition partner. The warnings issued by NATO and EU representatives prior to the election regarding the unacceptability of Mečiar's return to power functioned as a deterrent to any pro-democracy party entering into a coalition with the HZDS and as an encouragement to the Dzurinda led-coalition to remain united.

The 2002 elections, then, solidified Slovakia's democratic credentials and its commitment to join NATO and the EU. It resulted in an invitation for NATO membership at the November 2002 Prague Summit and EU membership at the December 2002 Copenhagen European Council. The two invitations, followed by the granting of actual membership in the two institutions in 2004, resulted from delayed conditionality, whereby the 1998 and 2002 Dzurinda governments implemented the policies required by NATO and the EU.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES

Unlike public opinion in the Czech Republic, which played a relatively insignificant role in regard to the question of NATO and EU membership, serving only to confirm the direction toward NATO and EU membership as established by the successive Czech governments, public opinion in Slovakia played a significant role in the country's accession to NATO and the EU. However, the significance of public opinion manifested itself primarily in the parliamentary elections rather than in the EU referendum. The Slovak public, encouraged by the activities and rhetoric of the anti-Mečiar elites, reacted to NATO's and the EU's criticisms of the country's development by decreasing its support for Mečiar and his HZDS in the 1998 and 2002 parliamentary elections and by

[117] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 42.

voting overwhelmingly in favor of Slovakia's membership in the EU in the May 2003 referendum. In a sense, Slovakia's EU referendum was something of a formality, as was the case with the Czech referendum. The 1998 and 2002 elections were the real referenda on the country's future development and the question of NATO and EU membership.

The debate on the Slovak accession to NATO and the EU was characterized by a lack of contestation. This was particularly true following the exclusion of Slovakia from the first wave of applicants invited to start the NATO and EU integration processes in 1997. After the rejection of Slovakia by the two institutions, the question facing the Slovaks was no longer whether they wanted to enter NATO and the EU but whether the two institutions wanted them as members.[118] Membership in NATO and the EU became bound up with the country's return from international isolation and the sense of success arising from the attainment of its democratic credentials. As a result, there was no "no" campaign to speak of, and the "yes" campaign was supported not only by the government but by also by the non-governmental sector. The positive outcome of the 2003 referendum on Slovakia's EU membership not only confirmed the strong elite consensus on the issue and the desire to achieve parity with the other Central and eastern European countries, it also signaled the formation of normative attitudes aligned with those endorsed by both NATO and the EU.

Attitudes toward NATO

Similar to that of the Czech Republic, the Slovak population's support for NATO membership was consistently lower than its support for EU membership. As with the

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[118] Karen Henderson, "EU Accession and the New Slovak Consensus," in *EU Enlargement and Referendums*, ed. Aleks Szczerbiak and Paul Taggart (Routledge: New York, NY, 2005), 100.

Czech Republic, the low support can be explained by certain historical experiences and the lack of public debate on the issue of NATO membership. The issue of history was more pronounced in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic due to the "special sensitivity about an infant national identity."[119] The Slovaks gained sovereignty only in 1993, following hundreds of years of foreign domination. The Slovaks cherished their sovereignty and, in the first several years of independence, espoused the view that Slovakia should not be told what to do by anyone else, especially another military alliance. Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan explained that Slovakia was hesitant "to take any steps that could lead to the loss of its much-revered independence and sovereignty. Integration with NATO was perceived by many in exactly this light."[120] Moreover, as discussed above, Slovakia had important historical and trade relations with Russia. As a result, the policy of neutrality, promoted by a section of the elites, found fertile ground among the Slovak public.

The Dzurinda government, which was an avid proponent of NATO membership, reacted to the low level of support (and the urging of NATO) by launching a public information campaign. The campaign was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it also encouraged participation on the part of the non-governmental sector. It included several mechanisms of persuasion, namely, TV debates and discussions with government officials and parliamentarians.[121] Public opinion regarding NATO suffered a major setback during NATO's campaign in Kosovo in 1999, when it dipped to mere 35% in June. Moreover, 53% of the respondents indicated their opposition to Slovakia's

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[119] Sarvaš, "The NATO Enlargement Debate in the Media and Civil-Military Relations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," 121.
[120] Krupnick and Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," 67.
[121] Drent et al., "Organising National Defences for NATO Membership," 83.

membership in the Alliance.[122] Even more dramatically, 65% of Slovaks opposed NATO's bombing of Serbian targets and only 28% endorsed them. The negative attitude was reflected also in the public view of the decision made by the Dzurinda government to open the country's airspace to NATO's aircraft, with 64% of the population disagreeing with the Cabinet's resolution and only 32% supporting it.[123]

Starting in the summer of 2000, public support for Slovakia's membership in the Alliance started to increase steadily, reaching 61% by the spring of 2002. However, in a year's time, the popularity of NATO had dropped sharply, to 34% (February 2003), in response to the Iraq war, with the opponents (55%) citing fears of Slovakia being drawn into an unwanted military conflict.[124] By fall 2003, however, the support for the country's accession to NATO stabilized at around 50%, reflecting the campaign led by the ruling coalition. In the end, the role of public opinion was subordinate to that of the Slovak leadership. Notwithstanding the public disapproval of NATO operations against Serbia, the Dzurinda government offered assistance to the Alliance. Moreover, despite the low level of support for NATO membership in spring 2003 stemming from the Iraq war, the Slovak National Council approved the country's accession to NATO on April 11, 2003. The endorsement was almost unanimous, with 124 parliamentarians voting in favor and only 11 voting against accession.[125]

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[122] Zora Bútorová, Olga Gyárfášová, and Marián Velšic, "Public Opinion," in *Slovakia 1998-1999: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Grigorij Mesežnikov, Michal Ivantyšyn, and Tom Nicholson (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1999), 156.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Zora Bútorová, Olga Gyárfášová, and Marián Velšic, "Public Opinion," in *Slovakia 2003: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Grigorij Mesežnikov and Miroslav Kollár (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 2004), 210.
[125] Matúš Korba and Marek Šťastný, "External Security, Defence and Slovakia's Integration to NATO," in *Slovakia 2003: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Grigorij Mesežnikov and Miroslav Kollár (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 2004), 333.

Attitudes toward the EU

As in the Czech case, the accession to the EU had to be approved by the Slovak population in a referendum. Therefore, the post-Mečiar Slovak leadership, which was very keen on achieving membership, had to ensure that the Slovaks would endorse membership in the referendum, which was set by the president for May 16-17, 2003. By the time of the referendum, all main political parties had endorsed membership, an indication that the political polarization of the Mečiar era had been replaced by cross-party collaboration. Unlike the Czech Republic, Slovakia had no hard Eurosceptic political parties. To illustrate, while many members of the Slovak Communist Party (KSS) had a negative view of EU membership, the party did not emphasize its rejection in its official electoral program for fear of losing voters. Moreover, the party leadership actually encouraged its supporters to vote in favor of membership prior to the May 2003 referendum.[126]

As a result of the elite consensus, the Slovak population's support for accession to the EU was consistently high in the years prior to the referendum, as demonstrated in the figures below. The disastrous NATO referendum of 1997 and the ensuing exclusion of Slovakia from the NATO and EU integration process in 1997 had made most Slovaks aware that there was no alternative to EU membership:

> ...to be anti-EU was to oppose the country's vital interest. It was not regarded as a legitimate viewpoint, to the extent that "anyone having reservations about, or even speaking out against, accession would immediately be labeled as an extremist."... The arguments could wait until after the accession hurdle had been overcome.[127]

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[126] Kopeček, *Demokracie, diktatury a politické stranictví na Slovensku* [Democracy, Dictatorships and Political Party Spirit in Slovakia] (Center for the Study of Democracy and Culture: Brno, 2006), 231.
[127] Henderson, "EU Accession and the New Slovak Consensus," 100.

The Slovaks were also more enthusiastic about the benefits of EU membership than the Czechs. In Chapter V, it was shown that the Czechs assumed a Eurosceptic position toward the EU. In fact, the Czechs were one of the most Eurosceptic applicants in the 2004 round of enlargement. The Slovaks were "consistently more Euro-enthusiastic" than their Eurosceptic Czech neighbors.[128] The following section serves to illustrate the more positive attitude of the Slovaks toward the EU by comparing the personal expectations of benefits or losses on the part of the Czech and the Slovak publics, as well as by analyzing the dynamics of the Slovak EU referendum.

Personal Expectations

There are many ways to illustrate the more positive attitude of the Slovaks toward the EU relative to the Czechs. One way is to compare the surveys on whether EU membership was considered a "good thing" or a "bad thing." The percentage of EU-optimists was consistently higher in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic, judging by their responses as to whether the upcoming enlargement of the EU was desirable or not.[129] Similarly, the Czechs and the Slovaks had different expectations regarding the impact of EU membership on personal life. As the statistics on education, position in the

[128] Petr Kopecky, "Mass Attitudes toward the European Union in the Czech and Slovak Republics" (paper presented at the Conference on Public Opinion about the EU in East-central Europe, University of Indiana, Bloomington, April 2-3, 2004): 1-26, 2, http://www.indiana.edu/~iupolsci/euconf/Kopecky.pdf (accessed April 28 2008).

[129] For statistical information, see European Commission, "Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2001" (March 2002): 56, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2001/cceb20011_en.pdf (accessed January 31, 2008); "Candidate Countries Eurobarometer: Report No. 2002.2" (December 2002): 62, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2002/cceb_2002_en.pdf (accessed January 31, 2008); and "Candidate Countries Eurobarometer CC-EB 2003.2: Highlights" (June 2003): 8, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2003/2003.2_highlights.pdf (accessed January 31, 2008).

labor market, and standard of living illustrate, the Slovaks were more optimistic regarding the benefits of membership than the Czechs.[130]

The Referendum

Due to the elite and public-level consensus on EU membership, the public campaign was "quite lackluster" and "without conflicts."[131] Its main slogans, "Better inside than out" and "We've got the future in our hands," aimed to persuade the citizens that their decision was crucial to the country's future and that there was no alternative to membership.[132] The campaign concentrated primarily on encouraging the citizens to vote. Voter turnout was of concern to the Dzurinda government for two reasons – the first relating to a stipulation of the Constitution and the second relating to electoral and, especially, referendum, fatigue. According to the constitution, a 50% turnout was necessary in order for the referendum to be deemed legitimate. Low turnout was expected due to the low contestation of the issue and the fact that the Slovaks had, in effect, voted on the question as to whether they wanted to integrate with Europe in the 1998 and 2002 parliamentary elections. Moreover, unlike the Czech Republic where the referendum on accession to the EU was the first referendum that had taken place in the country, Slovakia had had its share of experience with referenda. The Slovak population had demonstrated a lack of interest in the opportunity to vote in a referendum in the past, with the four previous referenda having failed as a result of turnout below the 50% threshold. This low

[130] Kopecky, "Mass Attitudes toward the European Union in the Czech and Slovak Republics," 19-23.
[131] Bútorová et al., "Public Opinion," in *Slovakia 2003*, 205.
[132] Henderson, "EU Accession and the New Slovak Consensus," 107.

turnout was primarily the result of polarization caused by the power struggle between the Mečiar government and the opposition.[133]

In the end, the referendum was a success. Not only was the turnout over the required 50% margin (52.15%), but the percentage of the "yes" vote - 92.46% - was overwhelming.[134] This "yes" vote was 15 percentage points higher than in the Czech Republic. In fact, it was the highest "yes" vote percentage among not only the Visegrad Group countries but among all the countries that carried out referenda prior to the 2004 enlargement, as well.[135]

In the comparison of the Czech and the Slovak referenda, several issues are worth noting. Even though the Slovak referendum demonstrated the greater enthusiasm of the Slovaks for membership, it also showed more significant variations across social characteristics and demography. In the Czech Republic, the level of the "yes" vote was rather consistent across all levels of education, age, and socioeconomic background. In Slovakia, however, the differences were much larger, with older people and less-educated people being much less inclined to support EU membership. The area where the two countries showed the greatest similarity was the correlation between the voting patterns and political affiliation, with the supporters of left-wing parties generally supporting EU membership less than the supporters of right-wing parties in both countries. Thus, as in the Czech Republic, the Communist voters in Slovakia tended not to vote or to vote "no." Sympathizers of the HZDS followed the same pattern.[136]

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[133] Ibid., 101-103.
[134] "Referenda o přistoupení k EU v kandidátských zemích" [Referenda on Accession to the EU in the Candidate Countries].
[135] Henderson, "EU Accession and the New Slovak Consensus," 96.
[136] Bútorová et al., "Public Opinion," in *Slovakia 2003*, 212.

CONCLUSION

The April 2004 NATO and May 2004 EU enlargements represented Slovakia's admission to the community of countries that had succeeded in their transformation from communism to democracy and market economy. It was an especially valuable achievement for Slovakia, which had experienced a tumultuous period under the leadership of Vladimír Mečiar. As a result of Mečiar's policies, which ran counter to the values espoused by NATO and the EU, Slovakia failed to pass the test of NATO and EU democratic conditionality and was, therefore, not invited to start the negotiations on membership with the two institutions in 1997. In this sense, NATO and EU membership conditionality came up short, since Mečiar refused to budge in response to the pressure of NATO and EU conditionality, choosing instead to pursue undemocratic means to solidify his power.

However, conditionality had a delayed effect, with Mečiar eventually running out of time to continue strengthening his position through the implementation of his version of a special Slovak method of transition, economic transformation, and modernization. Mečiar's opposition was, on the other hand, characterized by a pro-Western value orientation as well as interests relating to the benefits of integration, and it managed to persuade a large section of the Slovak public to adopt and endorse both, as demonstrated in the 1998 and 2002 presidential elections and the 2003 referendum on EU accession.

The policy of ostracism imposed by NATO and the EU, combined with the official and unofficial anti-Mečiar declarations issued by the two institutions and their member states prior to the elections, led to the end of Slovakia's exaggerated notion of its unique value to the two institutions under Mečiar. The effects of delayed conditionality

were apparent both in the 1998 and 2002 elections, which saw the demise of Mečiar, and in the swiftness with which the two Dzurinda governments attained parity with their Visegrad Group partners with respect to the instituting of democratic reforms and the implementing of policies in compliance with NATO and EU conditionality. These policies were widely supported in the Slovak National Council and by the majority of the Slovak political elites. In regard to both the NATO and the EU membership conditions, the Dzurinda coalition took compliance very seriously, as demonstrated by its declarations and, especially, by its actions, which eventually resulted in the securing of invitations to join the institutions.

The Slovak public played a secondary role in the actual process of Slovakia's integration into NATO and the EU. The public accepted the position of the Dzurinda government regarding the necessity of membership in both institutions without significant debate. The EU referendum confirmed both the lack of alternatives to EU membership in the eyes of the Slovaks and their desire for a Western normative orientation for the country following the excesses of the Mečiar era. As the results of the EU referendum and the data on personal expectations presented above clearly demonstrate, Slovakia transformed itself into one of the strongest supporters of NATO and, particularly, EU membership among the post-communist applicants.

CHAPTER VII

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

This dissertation is an inquiry into the interaction between the international and the domestic levels of analysis and the evaluation of rationalist and constructivist explanations of state behavior. More specifically, it studies how membership conditionality of NATO and the EU gets translated on the domestic level of the candidate states. Membership conditionality of NATO and the EU represents the international level; the candidate countries for membership and their efforts to comply with conditionality symbolize the level of domestic politics. The examination of conditionality also serves as an illustration of the interaction between rationalist and constructivist approaches to international relations. In order to study these dynamics and evaluate the explanatory power of rationalist and constructivist perspectives, this dissertation uses the case studies of the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and the EU.

The examination of the way the Czech Republic and Slovakia approached NATO and EU conditionality yields the following findings regarding the relationship between international pressure and domestic-level processes and the explanatory validity of rationalist and constructivist approaches: (1) the centrality of the domestic processes and particularly national leadership for compliance with institutional conditionality on the part of NATO and EU candidate states, and (2) the interaction of interests and norms in the process. The case studies demonstrate the need to examine the domestic level in order to understand the external phenomenon of conditionality. They confirm the importance of NATO and EU pressure, in the form of conditionality, for compliance. However,

successful compliance with conditionality requires voluntary cooperation on the part of the leadership in the candidate states to successfully translate the often complex requirements of membership into domestic policies. It is the national leaders who determine whether and how conditionality gets transferred. The presence of elites favorably disposed toward membership and, therefore, willing to implement the often difficult reforms is a *sine qua non* for successful compliance with conditionality.

The case studies also underline the need to overcome the dichotomy between the rationalist and constructivist explanations of empirical phenomena. Compliance with NATO and EU conditionality on the part of the Czech Republic and Slovakia was neither solely interest-driven nor rooted in a purely norm-conforming attitude. The Czech and Slovak decision-makers formulated their policies in response to NATO and EU conditionality based on both material interests, represented mainly by security, stability, and economic development, and norms, reflected primarily under the banner of "return to Europe." In other words, they displayed both consequentialist and norm appropriate behavior. Moreover, the cases shed light on the often subtle interaction between interests and norms. The process of integration into NATO and the EU witnessed the Czech and Slovak elites instrumentalizing norms and, by the same token, interpreting interests from a normative perspective. As a result, this study encourages the broadening of the scope of both rationalist and constructivist approaches in order to better account for the complex behavior displayed by nation-states. While rationalist scholars should pay a closer attention to the normative underpinnings of state behavior, constructivist explanations would benefit from considering rational and instrumental basis for state policies.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section offers a summary of the main aspects of NATO and EU conditionality and the closely related concept of the logic of behavior. It concentrates on the main characteristics of conditionality as derived from the case studies — asymmetry between the two institutions on one side and the applicants on the other side, the mechanisms of institutional leverage, and the implications of failure to comply with conditionality for the applicants. This section also provides a framework of how the tensions between these three concepts can be resolved. This framework is based on the dynamics of interest-driven behavior and norm-driven behavior.

The second section analyzes the case studies of the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and the EU and offers lessons learned on the process of compliance with conditionality as well as the complexities of the two logics of behavior. The empirical examples of the Czech Republic and Slovakia's route to NATO and EU membership imply that an "either-or" usage of the logic of behavior is too simplistic to capture the often subtle interaction between consequentialist and normative behavior. Moreover, the case studies demonstrate the importance of analyzing the political dynamics within the candidate countries for a deeper understanding of the workings of conditionality.

The concluding section turns to the future study of the nexus between the international and domestic politics as well as the logic of consequentiality and the logic of appropriateness. It addresses the very poignant and topical questions regarding compliance with NATO and EU norms and rules post-membership and in those circumstances where the "golden carrot" of membership is either a long-term affair (such as in the case of Turkey and the Balkans) or not a possibility at all in the foreseeable

future. This discussion aims at suggesting further forays into the study of institutional pressure, the strengths and weaknesses of NATO and EU conditionality, and the advancement of international relations theory by way of broadening the scope of rationalist and constructivist approaches.

CONDITIONALITY AND THE LOGICS OF BEHAVIOR

As prefaced above, this section returns to the discussion of conditionality and the two logics of behavior — the logic of appropriateness and the logic of consequentiality. The subsection that deals with conditionality summarizes the main aspects of NATO and EU conditionality and concentrates on the three main aspects of it as drawn from the case studies — asymmetry between the two institutions and the applicants, the mechanisms of institutional leverage (namely the performance of the candidates administered by NATO and the EU), and the implications of failure, with the ultimate result being non-membership. The second subset of analysis concentrates on the rationalist and normative types as they relate to the dynamic of compliance with conditionality.

NATO and EU Conditionality Revisited: Asymmetry, Institutional Leverage, and Implications of Compliance Failure

Institutional conditionality is the strategy of an international institution to promote compliance with institutional rules and norms on the part of national governments. Compliance, in turn, is defined as "the extent to which agents act in accordance with and in fulfillment of the conditions prescribed by international institutions,"[1] or, more simply, as the domestic-level response to institutional conditionality. The dynamic of compliance

[1] Checkel, "Compliance and Conditionality."

with conditionality is characterized by an international institution offering certain privileges and a national government enacting policies to gain those privileges. If national governments comply with the requirements entailed within conditionality, they get rewarded with the privileges.

This dissertation analyses the conditionality of NATO and the EU and demonstrates the process of compliance with NATO and EU conditionality by examining the way the Czech Republic and Slovakia satisfied the conditions of the two institutions for membership, which represents the ultimate reward for compliance with the institutional norms and rules. The norms and rules that needed to be satisfied by the applicant countries to achieve membership were defined, in the NATO case, in NATO's 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement."[2] The EU specified its conditions for enlargement in the so called Copenhagen Criteria, issued at the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993.[3]

As stipulated in Chapter II, the standards to be met that have been defined by the two institutions can be divided into two categories — those linked to the process of democratization and those related to satisfying the nature of the business of the organization. The former set conditions is usually referred to as "political" or "democratic" conditionality. The criteria of democratic conditionality are very similar for the two institutions, and they contain provisions for functioning democracy and market economy, the rule of law, human rights, protection of minorities, and peaceful relations with neighboring countries. The case studies clearly show the differences between the Czech Republic and Slovakia regarding the satisfaction of democratic conditionality in

[2] The requirements under the "Study on Enlargement" have been supplemented by the Membership Action Plan (MAP) since the April 1999 round of enlargement.
[3] European Council, "European Council in Copenhagen 21-22 June 1993 - Conclusions of the Presidency."

the mid-to-late 1990s. While the Czech Republic undertook steps to comply with NATO and EU democratic criteria, democratic conditionality proved to be the main stumbling block on Slovakia's way to membership in NATO and the EU. The policies of the successive governments led by Vladimír Mečiar between 1993 and 1998, characterized by a lack of respect for democratic principles and constitutional rights, resulted in Slovakia's absence from the process of European integration. Unlike the Czech Republic, Slovakia was left out from the 1999 round of NATO enlargement as well as from the first wave of applicants to start accession negotiations with the EU in 1998. Slovakia returned from isolation only after a new, pro-democratic government was elected in 1998 whose policies reversed the negative trend from the Mečiar years by aligning itself with NATO and EU democratic conditionality.

In the case of NATO, the latter set of conditions, i.e. those that characterize the mission of the organization, are related primarily to its responsibilities of a collective-defense organization. The "Study on NATO Enlargement" specifies that any new member "must accept the full obligations of the Washington Treaty" (which translates into the principle of decision-making by consensus) and "must also be prepared to contribute to collective defence under Article 5..."[4] As for the EU, the Copenhagen Criteria of 1993 postulate economic criteria that have to do with the existence of "functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union" as well as the *acquis* criteria that demand "the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the

[4] NATO, "Study on NATO Enlargement."

aims of political, economic, and monetary union" by transposing into national legislation and effectively implementing the Community *acquis*.[5]

Institutional conditionality in general and NATO and EU membership conditionality in particular are characterized by the following features that influence its effectiveness with regard to the ability and willingness of states to comply: *ex ante* and voluntary nature; strength, determinacy, and credibility; size of the incentives; power asymmetry; availability of alternatives to states; and the presence or absence of a gradual admission process. Based on the analysis in the case study chapters, it becomes evident that because of the nature of these characteristics, NATO and the EU were in control of the enlargement process. In other words, the voluntary nature of NATO and EU conditionality, combined with the credibility of the prospect of enlargement, the various pre-membership incentives in the form of financial aid and technical assistance, and the lack of viable alternatives to NATO and EU membership, resulted in a significant asymmetry between the two institutions and the applicants. The applicants were eager to join the two institutions in order to solidify their transition from communism to modern democratic states and to acquire the benefits associated with membership. This high demand for membership gave NATO and the EU leverage over the scope and timing of the process of enlargement.

This asymmetry had serious implications for the applicants, namely the fact that their success or failure in translating conditionality into practice was in their hands. They were the ones who had to persuade the NATO and EU member-states that they successfully completed the necessary requirements. Even though the two institutions had

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[5] European Council, "European Council in Copenhagen 21-22 June 1993 - Conclusions of the Presidency," 13.

a vested interest in opening their doors to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, namely the desire to stabilize the Central and Eastern European neighborhood, the prospective members were much keener to make enlargement a reality. The following subsection presents the implications of the asymmetrical relationship between the two institutions and the applicants and the closely related concepts of institutional leverage and the consequences of compliance failure as gleaned from the case studies.

Asymmetry and its Implications

The asymmetry between NATO and the EU on one hand and the Central and the Eastern European applicants on the other hand was rooted in the fact that the candidates perceived the benefits of membership as necessary for their successful development and transition from the communist legacy to democracy and market economy. The applicants considered the political, economic, social, and security benefits of membership vital to their future development. Thus, NATO and the EU were able to easily establish membership as the ultimate award and the exclusion from European integration as the ultimate punishment. As the case studies demonstrate, NATO and the EU were dictating the conditions and the process, and the candidate countries were the ones who had to respond by implementing appropriate policies. When compliance failed, as was the case of Slovakia under Mečiar, the institutions used various means of criticism and threat of exclusion from the pre-accession process and, ultimately, non-membership, as leverage.

Asymmetric interdependence made conditionality more powerful. It dwelled in the perception of benefits that the applicants expected to reach once members. These benefits were both tangible, such as political, economic, and security gains, and

intangible, which can be summarized under the banner of the "return to Europe." Becoming member states of NATO and the EU meant a confirmation of a successful transformation from communist identity to one of a democratic and modern state.

The attractiveness of NATO and the EU in the eyes of the applicants meant that they entered into the process on a voluntary basis, which further increased the asymmetry factor in the relations between them and the institutions. Moreover, the voluntary nature of the accession process meant that the countries themselves were responsible for their progress or lack thereof in applying the provisions of conditionality into practice across their domestic systems. Even though some countries had friendly supporters amongst the member states[6] and both NATO and the EU had programs in place to help the applicants implement the conditions of membership into practice, ultimately, all candidates were judged along the same lines, and only those that fulfilled the criteria were allowed to advance in the accession process. The voluntary nature of accession also placed significant amount of responsibility in the hands of the leadership of the respective candidate countries, as evidenced throughout the case studies presented in this dissertation.

Institutional Leverage and Enforcement

Conditionality and the resulting asymmetry between the two institutions on one hand and the applicants on the other gave NATO and the EU an immense degree of leverage to oversee and enforce compliance. The requirements of accession were prescribed by the two institutions, and they were nonnegotiable, which meant that the

[6] In the EU enlargement process, Greece was a supporter of Cyprus, Germany of Poland and also Hungary, the Northern European states of the Baltic states, Austria of Hungary, and Austria and Belgium of Slovakia. See Pavel Telička and Karel Barták, *Kterak jsme vstupovali* [How We Joined] (Prague: Paseka, 2003), 58.

candidates had little choice but to accept those conditions if they wanted to achieve membership. The room for maneuver was non-existent in the area of political conditionality for both NATO and the EU, which the Slovak case shows very clearly. Moreover, it was very narrow for the military preparedness and technical aspects of NATO membership and the EU *acquis*, as demonstrated by the limited number of derogations achieved by the candidates during negotiations with the EU.

Both institutions implemented a system for evaluating progress and enforcing conditionality. In the case of NATO enlargement, the enforcement mechanisms were, in fact, strengthened from the 1999 to the 2004 round of enlargement, when NATO added the Membership Action Plan (MAP) as a tool to prepare the candidates better for membership in the Alliance. As for the EU, it developed a robust system of evaluation, verification, and enforcement in order to capture the applicants' activities in all sections of the *acquis*. The Regular Reports, issued by the European Commission since 1998, were the primary vehicle of enforcement for the EU.

The analysis of the case studied presented below addresses the strengths and weaknesses of NATO and EU leverage over the candidates. The empirical cases show that conditionality is not a magic wand that, when waved, instantaneously makes all candidates better prepared for membership. Due to the voluntary basis of compliance with conditionality, the institutions have to use incentives rather than punishments.[7] What encourages countries to reform and adopt new laws and regulations is the prospect of membership rather than threats issued by the two institutions. In fact, the Slovak case is a clear example of the failures of conditionality when the demarches issued by the EU and

[7] Jan Zielonka, "Europe Moves Eastward: Challenges of EU Enlargement," *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 1 (January 2004): 23.

the United States as the key member of NATO failed to solicit a change of policies of the Mečiar government from authoritarian to democratic.

Nevertheless, the leverage of conditionality is strong due to the costs associated with exclusion from the pre-accession process and non-membership, as illustrated, once again, by Slovakia not becoming member of NATO along with the other Visegrad Group countries in 1999 and by its exclusion from the first wave of applicants to start negotiations with the EU in 1998. NATO and EU conditionality undermined the domestic power position of the Mečiar coalition and led to the victory of the pro-democratic and pro-NATO and EU opposition in the 1998 and 2002 elections. The failure of not having been a part of the first round of NATO enlargement and the first wave of EU applicants to start negotiations, combined with the threat of indefinite non-membership, encouraged the Mečiar opposition to unite for the purpose of electoral victory and to embark upon implementing the provisions of NATO and EU conditionality once in power. Similarly, in the Czech case, NATO and EU conditionality encouraged compliance in areas where the Czech decision-makers displayed reluctance or inability to agree, such as the reform of public administration, the rights of the Roma minority, or modernization of the armed forces.

Conditionality, Compliance, and the Logics of Behavior

As described in Chapter II, the international relations literature provides two basic frameworks for reconciling the tensions between conditionality and compliance and, more specifically between asymmetry and institutional leverage on one hand and the implications of compliance failure on the other hand. These explanations are associated

with interest-driven behavior and norm-driven behavior, representing the rationalist and constructivist perspectives. The rationalists stress the utilitarian, self-interested nature of actors, which fuels their desire to comply with conditionality in order to secure the benefits associated with conditionality. According to the rationalist approach, compliance with conditionality has its roots in the logic of consequentialism. The constructivists, on the other hand, reject the importance placed on gains and instead advocate the transformational power of socialization. According to the constructivists, the mechanisms of socializations, such as normative pressure, persuasion, and learning, explain the change of behavior on the part of actors.

It has been stated in Chapter II that the literature generally tends to treat conditionality and normative pressure as two separate and unrelated mechanisms of interaction between international institutions and states. As stated above, conditionality is closely linked to the rationalist set of explanations whereby desirable behavior on the part of member states is rewarded by the institution. Normative pressure, on the other hand, falls largely into the constructivist means of analysis, as it entails the reliance on norms rather than incentives by the international institutions to encourage change of behavior on the part of a nation-state. This dissertation argues, based on the case studies, that this division is not warranted in the case of NATO and EU membership conditionality, since both incentives and normative pressure are used to foster and cultivate desirable behavior. Incentives, such as developmental aid, are closely intertwined with the tools of normative pressure, such as official declarations and visits by representatives of the two institutions.

The rationalist approach to conditionality and compliance stresses the logic of consequence as the determinant of state behavior. The logic of consequence argues that only interest-driven behavior directed by cost-benefit calculation and instrumentalization of norms ensures compliance with conditionality. States weigh the benefits of membership, typified by access to security guarantees and economic prosperity, against the costs of membership, represented primarily by the loss of a certain portion of national sovereignty. The rationalist approach expects the applicants for membership to be eager to join the two institutions to materialize these interests. The theory would predict both the Czech Republic and Slovakia to seek membership in both NATO and the EU in the immediate aftermath of the end of communism and especially following the dissolution of the common state. The reasons for the pro-EU and NATO policy direction are centered on the need to compensate for deficiencies in size and resources and to address the security threats stemming from the geographical position in the proximity of Russia. As for the interest-driven opposition to compliance, attention is paid primarily to the self-interested preferences of the actors involved in the process in the candidate countries, while dismissing the role of socialization, reputation, shaming, and benefits of future exchange.

Normative explanations would expect the candidate countries to embrace the provisions of NATO and EU conditionality with minimal resistance as a result of the high normative pull of the two institutions and the process of socialization and learning through ever closer contact and cooperation. In other words, normative congruence takes precedence over instrumental and gain-seeking behavior according to the logic of appropriateness. Norms such as democracy, liberty, and human rights are considered the

motivating factors behind state behavior. As a result, the Czech Republic and Slovakia would be expected to comply with EU and NATO conditionality in order to achieve the fulfillment of norms and values rather than the attainment of interests.

As the case studies demonstrate, the actual state behavior is more complex than the theoretical predictions. The Czech and the Slovak process of gaining NATO and EU membership did not follow either purely rationalist or purely normative expectations. As for the logic of consequentiality, interests were certainly part of the mix. The EU was perceived as the only resource capable of reinvigorating the severely damaged economic systems. Similarly, both Prague and Bratislava came to perceive NATO as a much needed security guarantee against the threat of resurgent Russia and regional conflicts. The constructivist tendency to disregard cost analysis on the part of the actors involved in the process would result in an incomplete picture. It is simply impossible to ignore the traditional realist concepts, such as the importance of geopolitics, in assessing nation-state behavior.

At the same time, a purely rationalist approach is incapable of accounting for the genuinely norm-driven rhetoric and policies of leaders such as Václav Havel and other dissidents who formed the post-1989 Czechoslovak government. The group of Czech dissidents used the language of western democratic ideals long before the option of NATO and EU membership ever appeared on the horizon. Therefore, any attempts to discredit the normative aspects of their rhetoric as instrumental behavior would represent a serious misjudgment of the ideals and values developed throughout historical experiences. The case studies demonstrate the importance of previous experience with statehood and democracy for the effectiveness of conditionality.

Thus, the Czech and Slovak cases serve to promote the normative argument along with the rationalist logic. The historical experience with democracy on the part of the Czech leadership, contrasted with the formation of the Slovak post-communist leadership, helps explain the differences between the two countries' NATO and EU accession. Moreover, the normative context of the two institutions should not be overlooked. NATO and the EU were perceived by the two countries as well as the other applicants from Central and Eastern Europe as representing the European civilization and culture, and they have strived to imprint the culture of the community of values on the candidate countries. The Czech leaders as well as the post-Mečiar leaders were intent to become a part this community in order to confirm a positive development of their countries' identities.

However, it would be naïve to argue that compliance happens solely as a result of socialization through NATO and EU's normative appeal. If gaining NATO and EU membership were only about the confirmation of a certain identity and of the idea of belonging, it would fail to account for the "slips" along the way. The EU and NATO would not have needed to issue reports criticizing the Czech Republic for insufficient progress in reforms. Similarly, neither institution would have been forced to temporarily exclude Slovakia from integration for the affronts against human and constitutional rights.

The case studies also serve as demonstration of the tensions within the individual theoretical approaches as well as the instrumentalization of interests and norms. National identity and sovereignty serve as the primary examples of these tensions. On one hand, the Czech leadership was characterized by a high level of consensus regarding the

desirability of membership from identity perspective. The Czechs were eager to join the two institutions to reaffirm their belonging amongst the most democratic and developed countries in the world. On the other hand, the legacy of successful statehood, combined with the experiences of subordination to the Habsburg rule, Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Union, contributed to the difficulties of reconciling with the idea of having another "ruler" in Brussels. This trend has been embodied in Euroscepticism promulgated by Václav Klaus and other Czech leaders.

The issue of identity was even more pronounced in the Slovak case. Having gained independence only in 1993, Slovakia was captivated by its nation-building endeavor. Mečiar and his supporters used this enthusiasm to their advantage by accusing the opponents of not having the best interest of the country in mind. Furthermore, they employed the nationalist tendencies, skillfully using the history of the Hungarian domination of Slovakia to fend of criticism for the government's unwillingness to improve the status of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia as required by NATO and EU membership conditionality.

The analysis of the case studies presented in the next section pays close attention to the interest-norm dynamics in the process of compliance with NATO and EU membership conditionality in order to show the false dichotomy between rationalist and constructivist sets of explanations. Given the popular nature of the topic of NATO and EU enlargement in international relations literature and the richness of the theoretical debate that surrounds it, the approach advocated in this dissertation is not a novel one or one that encompasses the entire spectrum of the empirical phenomena related to conditionality. The goal is to contribute to the debate by drawing lessons from the

empirical example in order to suggest approaches that can improve theory as well as our understanding of real-world phenomena.

LESSONS LEARNED

This section reflects on the experiences of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in becoming members of NATO and the EU and highlights the key findings regarding NATO and EU conditionality. The evidence presented in the case studies leads to the following two primary conclusions: (1) the centrality of the domestic processes and particularly national leadership for compliance with institutional conditionality on the part of the NATO and EU candidate states; and (2) the interaction of interests and norms in the process. NATO and EU pressure, in the form of conditionality, was important for compliance. However, it required the involvement of and oversight by domestic leadership to achieve successful policy change. As the Czech case study demonstrates, the presence of a broad-level consensus among the key leaders played a crucial role for successful compliance with NATO and EU conditionality. This pro-membership consensus, based on both interests and ideals, allowed for the overcoming of the occasional lack of enthusiasm to implement the necessary reforms. Similarly, the Slovak case study serves as an example of the failures of conditionality in the context of leaders keener on strengthening their national positions than on meeting the requirements of European integration.

The case studies also underline the need to pay attention to the interaction of various theoretical approaches. The choices of Czech and Slovak decision makers were informed by both material interests (such as security, stability, and economic

development) and normative concerns, characterized as the desire to "return to Europe." Moreover, the case studies demonstrate the often subtle interaction between interests and norms and within each approach. The leaders instrumentalized norms to advocate policy change and interpreted interests as norms, at times causing tensions between individual interests and sets of norms. The use of a parsimonious explanation, be it solely rationalist or constructivist, would cause the overlooking of the subtle interaction between the consequentialist and normative behavior as well as the missing out on the lack of cohesion within each individual explanation.

NATO and EU Conditionality

The main difference between the Czech Republic and Slovakia in terms of compliance had to do with democratic conditionality. The Czech democracy, albeit not without flaws, had demonstrated durability and stability in the pre-accession stage of NATO and EU enlargement. The Slovak democracy, on the contrary, was plagued by affronts against minority rights and constitutional order. NATO and the EU were critical of the Mečiar coalition's sidelining of the political opposition, of the attacks against presidential powers, and of the treatment of minorities, represented by the language law and the xenophobic rhetoric of some members of the Mečiar government, including its leader.

The case studies show the importance of not only conditionality but also the passive leverage of the two institutions, defined in Chapter II as the attraction of membership that precedes any formal invitation for membership.[8] Conditionality played a crucial role in persuading the at times reluctant Czech leadership to implement the

[8] Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*, 63.

necessary measures to advance in the accession process. Moreover, while conditionality failed to persuade the Mečiar government to institute reforms in Slovakia, it contributed significantly to Mečiar's demise and to the installation of a new, pro-democratic and pro-NATO and EU government following the 1998 and 2002 Slovak parliamentary elections. At the same time, the case studies indicate the importance of the period of passive leverage for the candidate country's success in satisfying conditionality. In the Czech and Slovak case, the period prior to invitation to start negotiations served to formulate future policy goals. The Czech leadership established a normative framework congruent with NATO and EU conditionality that aided compliance with conditionality in the latter stages of the accession process, which was dominated by interests. In Slovakia, a genuine pro-NATO and pro-EU normative framework was not established upon the formation of independent Slovakia. Even though the Mečiar government adopted rhetoric advocating NATO and EU membership, the actual policies were directed at satisfying the interests of the elites rather than the prospects of membership.

The Czech case demonstrates the power of institutional pressure under the conditions of positively-aligned leadership. Membership in NATO and the EU was the cornerstone of all the efforts on the part of the post-communist administrations since 1989. They perceived enlargement both as inevitable and necessary for the future of the country. Nevertheless, enlargement was a complex process, especially in the case of the EU given the breadth and depth of EU's reach into domestic policy. The process involved not only compromise, adaptation, and learning, but also resistance to the changes demanded by NATO and the EU. Even though the Czech Republic found the demands placed upon it by conditionality easier to handle than many other candidates, it is still

possible to draw lessons regarding conditionality in instances of a lack of will to implement necessary policies.

The Slovak case is more complex than the Czech case. It teaches us about the failure of compliance on policy choices of leaders who are more interested in pursuing power politics in the domestic setting than in complying with the requirements of NATO and EU membership, as illustrated by Mečiar between 1993 and 1998. At the same time, conditionality proved of a fundamental importance in the Slovak domestic politics by influencing the coalition building during the 1998 and 2002 parliamentary elections.

Table 2 offers an overview of the interest-norm dynamic as it relates to the role of domestic leadership in promoting or hindering the country's advancement in compliance with NATO and EU conditionality. The table evaluates the respective governments based on to what extent their interests and norms were aligned with those encompassed in NATO and EU conditionality.

Table 2: Czech and Slovak Governments and Compliance with Conditionality

Governments of the Czech Republic	*Months in Office*	*Interest Alignment*	*Norm Alignment*	*Compliance with Conditionality*
V. Klaus (ODS) (Jan. 1993 –Dec. 1997)	47	1	1	Moderate
J. Tošovský (Independent) (Dec. 1997 – July 1998)	7	2	2	Moderate
M. Zeman (ČSSD) (July 1998 – July 2002)	48	2	2	High
V. Špidla (ČSSD) (July 2002 – July 2004)[9]	24	2	2	High
Governments of Slovakia				
V. Mečiar (HZDS) (Jan. 1993-March 1994)	14	0	0	Minimal
J. Moravčík (DEÚS) (March 1994- Dec. 1994)	9	2	2	Moderate
V. Mečiar (HZDS) (Dec. 1994 – Oct. 1998)	46	0	0	Minimal
M. Dzurinda (SDK/SDKÚ) (Oct. 1998 – July 2006)	93	2	2	High

Note: 0 = minimal alignment; 1 = low alignment; 2 = high alignment

The premiership of Václav Klaus between 1993 and 1997 is rated as a period of moderate rather than high compliance due to the reluctance on the part of the Klaus government to reform of the military and the predominance of Eurospepticism in Klaus's attitude toward the EU. The government, dominated by Klaus's concentration on the economic reform, was less than consistent in implementing the provisions of NATO conditionality in the area of defense reform. It was characterized by weak oversight of the reform and lack of doctrine. Only in the months prior to the Madrid Summit did the Klaus government adopt the doctrinal documents and implement an institutional structure necessary for further military transformation. As for compliance with EU conditionality,

[9] Vladimír Špidla was followed by Stanislav Gross (July 2004-April 2005) and Jiří Paroubek (April 2005-August 2006) in the position of the Czech Prime Minister, both representatives of the Social Democratic Party (ČSSD).

the government displayed a "Euro-passive" attitude whereby the institutional and legal reforms lagged behind the economic reforms. While Klaus considered the implementation of economic reforms necessary for the future development of the country, he was reluctant to implement policies that would transfer the decision-making powers from Prague to Brussels.

The Tošovský government is rated as moderately compliant despite high normative and interest alignment, namely due to the short period in office. Nevertheless, the Tošovský government managed in the seven month of transition from the Klaus to the Zeman government to implement important reforms in view of both NATO and EU membership. The Zeman government successfully completed the reforms undertaken by the Klaus and Tošovský governments to achieve NATO membership in April 1999. The Social-Democratic Zeman and Špidla governments played a decisive role in complying with EU conditionality, leading to the Czech accession to the EU in 2004.

In Slovakia, the level of compliance with conditionality was minimal while Vladimír Mečiar was in power. Even though the Mečiar governments officially endorsed the goal of NATO and EU membership, they refused to apply the requirements of membership in practice. The Mečiar governments, unlike the Czech governments, thought there were other options besides NATO and EU membership, namely the idea of a bridge between West and East and closer relations with Russia. Moreover, the coalition partners of Mečiar's HZDS – the Slovak National Party and the Workers' Party – were both opposed to solely Western orientation of Slovakia. Even though the interim government led by Jozef Moravčík tried to reverse the course, it was in power for too

short a time to accomplish any significant changes prior to Mečiar's return in 1994. Therefore, compliance is deemed moderate.

The real change did not occur until the arrival of the Dzurinda government following the September 1998 parliamentary elections. Even thought the institutional pressure of NATO and the EU failed to change the undemocratic behavior on the part of Mečiar and his coalition, Mečiar felt the effects of conditionality in the 1998 and, yet again, in the 2002 parliamentary elections. On both occasions, Mečiar's HZDS not only saw its share of votes decline, but primarily, no respectable pro-EU and pro-NATO party was open to a coalition partnership with the HZDS. This "delayed conditionality" also functioned as an impetus for the Mečiar opposition to achieve cohesion before the two parliamentary elections and to overcome internal divisions while in power.

NATO and EU conditionality played a prominent role in the policy-making of the Dzurinda government. Since its first day in office, Prime Minister Dzurinda and his cabinet dedicated themselves to taking the country back on track in terms of NATO and EU integration. As a result of their resolve and the almost unanimous support of the Slovak Parliament, Slovakia managed to catch up on the "first wave" of EU applicants, and namely the other three Visegrad Group countries. Even though Bratislava started the accession negotiations two years later than its Visegrad Group neighbors, it managed to conclude them in the same time horizon. By the same token, the performance of the Dzurinda government and namely its activities in improving democracy, the rule of law, and the status of the Hungarian minority led to the membership invitation by NATO.

Logic of Appropriateness and the Logic of Consequentiality

The following section analyses into more depth the presence and role of norms and interests in the process of compliance with NATO and EU conditionality on the part of candidate countries. The case studies confirm the importance of the presence of a normative framework that is aligned with the norms entailed in NATO and EU conditions for membership for a successful compliance with conditionality. The intangible, ideational aspects, such as national pride and self esteem, form an integral part of the mix of reasons behind the desire to become NATO and EU members. Membership in the Alliance and in the EU represents a confirmation of not only the advancement and stabilization of democracy, market economy, and the rule of law, but also of the confirmation of the positive development of national identity.

While the Czech debate on membership prior to the accession process witnessed an unqualified support for the notion of "return to Europe," this elite consensus was lacking in Slovakia. The difference was caused by a diverging orientation of the leading elites in the two countries. The Czech post-communist elite was characterized by the presence of former dissents and technocrats advocating western-style reforms. Slovakia lacked a similarly large and powerful group of westward-leaning leaders, stemming from a more positive view of Communism by the Slovaks than the Czechs. Even though a pro-democratic elite existed in Slovakia, it was overpowered by populist and nationalistic trend espoused by Mečiar and his followers, many of whom were reform communists.

Even though the normative framework was important for establishing the general direction vis-à-vis the candidate country's future relations with NATO and the EU, the actual accession process, delineated by the invitation to start negations and the

ratification of membership, was characterized by the importance of interests. The case studies then confirm the primacy of interest in the process of compliance with conditionality. Once again, the Czech case is an example of an alignment of elite interests with the requirements of conditionality, while the Slovak case demonstrates the pitfalls of elite interest being in opposition to the conditions of NATO and EU membership.

Czech Republic: The Power of Norms

The Czech Republic demonstrated a steady pro-western course throughout the EU and NATO accession process. The Czech leadership reconnected to the traditions of the democratic and economically developed interwar Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the legacy of the dissident movement created a natural link to the post-1989 transition and European integration. The congruence between the Czech and the European identities went deep to the past in the Czech case. The first Czechoslovak President, Tomas G. Masaryk, made the link between the Czechoslovak state and European "humanism and universal democratic values."[10] Similarly, the Czech dissidents and intellectuals in exile discussed the link between Czech and European values. The "Charter 77" manifesto is another example of normative language, referencing basic civil rights, such as freedom of speech and religion.[11] The June 1989 petition "A Few Sentences" was also value-based. It called for the government to implement "substantive and extensive systemic changes" based on "free and democratic discussion." It demanded "the change of the social climate...in which the spirit of freedom, trust, tolerance, and plurality must return."[12] It also called for

[10] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 25.
[11] "Charta 77 - text prohlášení" [Charter 77 – Text of the Declaration]. Totality. http://www.totalita.cz/texty/ch77_dok_1977_01_01.php (accessed October 5, 2007).
[12] "Petice Několik vět (text)" [A Few Sentences Petition (Text)].

the freeing of political prisoners, freedom of expression for the media, and public discussion regarding history, (namely the events of 1968), politics, and activities of the government.[13]

The entire work of Václav Havel has been about values and ideals. For example, his 1985 essay "The Power of the Powerless" is about individuals cultivating the truth within themselves in hope of becoming an irresistible force that would eventually topple the communist regime. Jiří Dienstbier, one of the spokespersons for the "Charter 77" movement, wrote an essay "Dreaming of Europe" (1986) in which he envisioned the unification of the continent. Klaus, while not a dissident author, was a staunch advocate of western-style economics, for which he was demoted.

The Czech political elite adopted a normative discourse immediately following the Velvet Revolution. With President Havel as the key representative of the normative set of explanations, the Czechs were presented with the idea of "Europe" being the traditional "home" of the Czech national identity. The desire to "return to Europe" was not, in the aftermath of the 1989 Velvet Revolution, associated with entry into NATO and the EU. It was seen rather as a natural development stemming from the desire to achieve the same level of success in stability, democracy, and economic development as in Western Europe. As a result, the Czechs, unlike their Slovak counterparts, had an advantage of not having to build a new national identity. The legacy of democracy and free economy as well as active anti-communism within Czechoslovakia and in exile led to a natural identification of the Czechs with the values encompassed in NATO and the EU. The two institutions were viewed as a source of support for a renewed democratic

[13] "Petice Několik vět" [A Few Sentences Petition], Totality, http://www.totalita.cz/vysvetlivky/nvet.php (accessed July 14, 2008).

identity. The western values were extremely appealing especially when contrasted with the history of Soviet control of the country, represented by the events of the 1968 Prague Spring and the period of normalization.

As for interests, they became part of the debate once the idea of the "return to Europe" was firmly anchored in the national psyche. Interests were a crucial part of both the NATO and EU debate, as reflected in the election programs of the Czech parties, the program declarations of the successive governments, the parliamentary debates on NATO membership, and the debates preceding the country's referendum on EU membership. The interests related to NATO membership had to do primarily with security. The Czech elites believed NATO represented the only option for the maintenance of national sovereignty in view of potential threats. The leaders were aware of the limits of the country's defense, stemming from small size, limited resources, and close proximity to unpredictable Russia. They were also reacting to the multifaceted nature of non-military threats, as represented by ethnic and religious conflict in former Yugoslavia. Furthermore, future membership was associated with technology transfer, infrastructure development, emergency planning, and lower costs of defense. Chapter IV shows clearly the consensus amongst the main political parties and country leaders regarding the benefits of membership. This consensus resulted in NATO membership being a *fait accompli*, as demonstrated by the lack of debate on the public level and the clear vote in favor of membership in the Czech Parliament.

The Czech debate on interests associated with EU membership was more complex than that of NATO membership due to the nature of the institution. The interest dynamic was visible namely through the prism of the phenomenon of Euroscepticism, which was

more pronounced in the Czech Republic than in any other candidate within the 2004 round of enlargement. The Eurosceptic position, advocated principally by Václav Klaus and his Civic Democratic Party, was related to the costs and benefits of membership in regard to national sovereignty. While the proponents of membership stressed the future benefits of membership in the economic realm, the Eurosceptics warned against the constraints on national decision-making by transferring many powers to the supranational institution. Nevertheless, even the Eurosceptics considered the country's membership in the EU as inevitable and necessary for the country's future successful development, with the benefits overweighing the costs. The benefits had to do primarily with economic prosperity, as represented by the access to investment and technology, elimination of trade barriers, improved business standards, and free movement of labor. The EU was also viewed as a guarantor of stability and security and as an access point to EU decision-making.

Nevertheless, the road to NATO and EU membership was not smooth. The country experienced instances when the internal transformation was "out of tune" with the demands of NATO and EU conditionality.[14] These instances were, however, minor compared to the country's eastern neighbor, the Slovak Republic. When problems occurred on the domestic level, as was the case of the economic downturn in 1997, unfinished privatization of major banks, lack of civil service reform, deficiencies in the treatment of minorities, or lack of cooperation in the Parliament in adopting EU-related legislature, the EU conditionality functioned as an impetus for the Czech decision makers to close ranks and proceed with the implementation of the *acquis* despite the presence of Euroscepticism in politics and amongst the population. The critical tone of the 1998 and

[14] Rovna, "The Enlargement of the European Union: The Case of the Czech Republic," 109.

1999 Regular Reports on the Czech Republic's progress in fulfilling the Copenhagen Criteria influenced Czech policy-making in a direct way, with the leadership accelerating the accession process with the aim of reclaiming "its place as the flag ship of countries negotiating full membership in the EU."[15] The reports served to unify the pro-democratic and pro-market economy forces of the Czech political scene, as evidenced by the cooperation between the rivaling Social Democrats (ČSSD) and the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) in the period 1998-2002.

To summarize, the leadership of the Czech Republic managed to avoid major failures on its way to NATO and EU membership not only because it perceived it as beneficial for the country but also because it was able to identify itself with the norms the two institutions represent. The Czech leadership was successful in creating a linkage between their interests and norms and the interest and norms encompassed in NATO and EU conditionality. This "normative harmony" between the institutions and the domestic level was clearly visible at the beginning of the accession process, with President Havel serving as the country's guide in morality, and it proved crucial for sustaining the efforts once the country moved to the point in the process that required hard choices in order to satisfy the conditions of NATO and EU membership. The Czech Republic had a number of vocal "norm entrepreneurs" who made sure the country was heading in the right direction.

Slovakia: The Success of Delayed Conditionality

Slovakia lacked the overwhelmingly pro-western and pro-integration attitude displayed by the Czech elite upon its foundation in 1993. Even though a pro-democratic

[15] Ibid., 115.

elite existed in Slovakia, it was overpowered by populist and nationalistic trend espoused by reform communists, represented chiefly by Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar and his followers. As a result, the Slovak elite did not manage to achieve a consensus regarding the desirability of the country's NATO and EU membership as early as their Czech counterparts.

The Slovaks were disadvantaged compared to the Czechs by having a history of dominance by others. Unlike the Czechs, whose experienced with national identity goes as far back as the Bohemian Kingdom, the Slovaks suffered from unfulfilled desire for nationhood. Even in Czechoslovakia, the Slovaks did not manage to gain the status of independent nation, and they, therefore, did not associate themselves with the Czechoslovak identity to the same extent as the Czechs. Moreover, the only experience with nationhood, that of the World War II Slovak state, was tainted by its association with Nazi Germany. As a result, Slovakia had a more difficult starting position than the Czech Republic, with the NATO and EU pressure being pitched against the state and nation-building efforts.

Therefore, Slovakia lacked a normative framework to overcome the opposition to those aspects of conditionality that required major adjustments on the domestic level. Furthermore, the "norm entrepreneurs" were sidelined by Mečiar until the NATO and EU conditionality gave them a reason to unify against Mečiar and remove him from power in order to attain the "return to Europe." As the undemocratic escapades of Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar continued to isolate the country, the opposition started to establish a normative framework that was in sync with NATO and EU conditionality. The normative aspects, combined with the post-Mečiar leadership's perception of NATO and EU

membership as being in its interest and necessary for the future of the country, eventually brought Slovakia on track and allowed it to catch up with the rest of the applicants and successfully enter both NATO and the EU.

The interest dynamic between Slovakia on one hand and NATO and the EU on the other hand is, once again, more complex than in the Czech case due to the presence of two types of elites at the helm of the country. Despite the pro-NATO and pro-EU rhetoric on the part of the successive Mečiar governments, NATO and EU membership were not perceived as a clear necessity from the interest-perspective. Mečiar and his HZDS, together with the other members of the coalition (The Slovak National Party and the Workers' Party) did not consider NATO and the EU to be crucial for Slovakia's security and economic development. They toyed with the idea of neutrality and of closer alignment with Russia. This foreign policy direction was influenced not only by the normative aspects discussed above, namely the desire to build an independent Slovak identity and the history of the Slavic connection, but also by the perceived benefits in the form of security guarantees by Moscow and of market opportunities for Slovak products in Russia in exchange for natural resources. Moreover, the successive Mečiar governments appreciated the fact that Moscow, unlike Brussels, did not criticize their policies. Most importantly, the Mečiar coalitions, in power between 1992 and 1997, did not see a good enough match between their interests and the benefits of NATO and EU membership. They refused to harmonize their interests and norms with those of the two organizations, as the costs of compliance were perceived to be too high in relations to the benefits of non-compliance.

This study clearly shows the shortcomings of NATO and EU conditionality during the premiership of Vladimír Mečiar in Slovakia. The impact of the demarches issued by the EU and the declarations of individual NATO and EU members criticizing the status of Slovakia's democracy and threatening Slovakia with exclusion from the first wave of enlargement had negligible impact on the Mečiar government. The lack of impact was due to the unwillingness on the part of Mečiar and his coalition to self-impose restrictions on their policies and thus diminish their position in exchange for improving the country's chances of being included in the first wave of invitees by complying with the EU's Copenhagen Criteria and NATO's membership standards. In other words, Mečiar and his coalition placed their interests ahead of those of the country.

By the same token, the Slovak case study provides a lesson about the role of conditionality in strengthening and unifying the opposition against the autocratic rule.[16] The marginal impact of conditionality started to reverse following the 1997 NATO Madrid and the EU Luxembourg summits. The failure of the Mečiar government to secure Slovakia's position along with the other Visegrad Group countries as a frontrunner of European integration served as an impetus for the political opposition to unite and to overthrow the autocratic Mečiar government from power in the 1998 elections and to take the country back into the midst of successfully transforming Central and Eastern European countries.[17] The Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), led my Mikuláš Dzurinda, was formed as a direct response to the disastrous 1997 referendum on the direct election of President and on NATO membership.

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[16] See also Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*, 178.

[17] For a view that minimizes the role of conditionality and stresses the role of domestic factors (the desire to improve the political and economic situation in the country) as a motivating factor for the opposition, see Haughton, "What Does the Case of Slovakia Tell us about the EU's Active Leverage?," 4.

The opposition was motivated by both rational and normative aspects. The rational aspects had to do with remedying the domestic political and economic situation, characterized by deep polarization of the political field, corrupt privatization projects, and affronts against human rights and rights of the minorities. The normative aspects were encompassed in the desire to improve Slovakia's reputation, to end its international ostracism, and to show to NATO and EU members that Slovakia was a country of a pro-Western and pro-democratic leaning.

The arrival of the Dzurinda coalition to power in 1998 marked a significant turn in the perception of national interest, with NATO and EU membership being deemed vital for Slovakia's future development. Similarly to the Czech Republic, the Dzurinda government perceived membership in NATO and the EU as the only alternative with respect to security guarantees and economic growth. Members of the Dzurinda coalition made arguments stressing limited military capacity and resources from the perspective of national security and the cost benefits of collective security. As for the EU, the Slovak leadership stressed the benefits of economic integration and access to the common market. The Slovak population hoped to achieve an improvement in their quality of life, as evidenced in the opinion surveys conducted prior to the 2003 referendum on EU membership.

The desire to "normalize" Slovakia was reflected in the activities of the Dzurinda government. Unlike in the case of Mečiar, where a wide gulf divided declaratory policies regarding NATO and the EU and the actual policies adopted by the government, the program of the Dzurinda government served as a guide for the implementation of policies aimed at satisfying the NATO and EU membership criteria. For example, in the 2000

Regular Report, the Commission was critical of Slovakia's inability to establish independent judiciary and fight corruption as well as the overall weakness of its institutions and lack of capacity to translate the *acquis* into practice. The Dzurinda government reacted by amending the Constitution through a parliamentary vote in February 2001, which led to many reforms demanded by the EU. These reforms included, for example, increasing the powers of the constitutional court, laying the ground for further reform of public administration, and establishing provisions for the creation of the position of ombudsman (the public defendant of human rights).

EU and NATO conditionality reverberated through the Slovak political system also prior to the 2002 elections. The elections were closely linked to the issue of Slovakia's European integration. Both NATO and the EU issued warnings that Mečiar's return to power would shut the door for Slovakia. The Slovak pro-NATO and EU elites, led by Mikuláš Dzurinda, responded by forming the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU) whose main goals included taking Slovakia to NATO and the EU and ensuring Mečiar would remain without a coalition partner.

In short, the Slovak case study demonstrates the effect of delayed conditionality on the Slovak political scene. Even though NATO and EU membership conditionality failed to change the behavior of the Mečiar coalition from one characterized by undemocratic tendencies to one aligned with NATO and EU principles, it proved crucial for uniting the Mečiar opposition. It was the desire to take the country back on the course toward democratization and membership in NATO and the EU that functioned as a unifying element for the 1998 and 2002 Dzurinda governments. NATO and EU conditionality contributed in an important way to turning around the entire country and

leading it from international isolation back amongst the most progressive post-communist countries. The link between conditionality and the pro-democratic and pro-NATO and EU opposition is then one of the key lessons from the Slovak case study.

CONCLUSION

The case studies show both the successes and the failures of NATO and EU membership conditionality. Since the NATO and EU accession process is voluntary in nature, incentives were a lot more powerful than constraints. The carrots stemming from future NATO and EU membership provided very strong incentives for leadership in both countries to comply with institutional conditionality. The case studies also demonstrate that the goal of NATO and EU membership was not only about the benefits. It was also about the ideas of becoming modern and civilized nations following the detrimental effects of communism. The fact that "Europe" was seen by and large as an ideal civilization characterized by desirable values and norms of political behavior, society, and economy went hand in hand with the perceived benefits, be it access to markets or security, that were expected upon joining both organizations.

Finally, the case studies demonstrate the importance of leadership in moving forward in the enlargement process or, on the other hand, in holding the candidate country back. Despite the vast power asymmetry between the institutions and the candidates, conditionality is not a one-way street. For conditionality to work, more is required than just a list of requirements and pressure for their implementation. Institutional conditionality needs to be accompanied by the existence of actors on the national level that support the process on normative and rational grounds. In the Czech

and the Slovak case, it was the relatively small group of leaders that perceived membership both as beneficial from the interest perspective and desirable from normative perspective that navigated the two countries through rather tough conditions of NATO and the EU. From the theoretical perspective, European integration cannot be explained by a single paradigm. Instead, a broad range of methods and theories is necessary to describe and explain this complex and multi-level phenomenon.

In the Czech Republic, all governments during the period under examination displayed moderate to high level of compliance with NATO and EU conditionality stemming from the consensus on the desirability of membership in the two institutions. This consensus, as argued above, was rooted both in the logic of appropriateness and the logic of consequentiality. However, conditionality does not work if the costs of compliance are higher than the benefits, as demonstrated by Mečiar's unwillingness to respond to the criticism mounted by both NATO and the EU. The demarches, issued by the United States as the key NATO member state and the European Union, had a zero effect on the activities of the Mečiar government. Mečiar and his allies were not willing to accept the constraints on their policies that compliance with NATO and EU conditionality would have required of them. Even though they were, in essence, in favor of Slovakia's membership in the two institutions, the costs of compliance were deemed too high with respect to their domestic goals.[18] As a result, it is possible to conclude that cooperation on the part of the elites is critical for institutional conditionality to work. By the same token, sanctions imposed by NATO and the EU have an impact only where the

[18] For a similar point, see Tim Haughton, "When Does the EU Make a Difference? Conditionality and the Accession Process in Central and Eastern Europe," *Political Studies Review* 5 (2007): 241.

political elites perceived membership as desirable and identified themselves with the process of integration and the norms of the institutions.[19]

The 1997 Madrid NATO Summit and the EU Luxembourg European Council meeting proved both the credibility of the prospect of membership and the threat of exclusion. The fact that three countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland) were invited to join NATO and five countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia) were invited to start negotiations on EU membership confirmed the intention of the two institutions to accept new members. Moreover, the exclusion of other countries, such as Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania, from the NATO and EU frontrunner candidates sent a clear message to the laggards that the institutions were serious about the necessity to implement the necessary reforms for membership to become a reality.

EU and NATO conditionality, especially in the form of the 1997 rejection of Slovakia, had a decisive effect on the removal from power of Mečiar's nationalist populism following the 1998 elections as well as on the efforts on the part of the Dzurinda coalition to maintain cohesion and implement the necessary reforms. In the Czech case, NATO and EU conditionality played an important role in finishing the transition commenced in the early 1990s in areas where the Czech government was dragging its feet, such as the judiciary and civil service reform and bank privatization. The criticism captured in the EU's Regular Reports was then translated into reforms. The Czech leadership wanted to ensure a placement for the Czech Republic in the first post-Cold war enlargement of the EU.

It is beyond doubt that NATO and EU membership and the process leading to it have led to institutional consolidation of not only the Czech Republic and Slovakia but

[19] Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*, 53.

also the remaining new member states. The systematic process of social, political, economic, and military transformation directed by the two institutions in the form of conditionality accelerated and amplified the policies of change that the post-1989 Czechoslovak leadership embarked upon following the end of communism.[20] The presence of the NATO and EU framework over the national framework has, so far, proven valuable for the maintenance of political, social, and economic stability and overall high level of democracy. Both countries have experienced a period of stability and unprecedented economic growth. Moreover, Slovakia is poised to adopt the euro as early as 2009. Military reforms have also continued successfully, allowing both countries to support the mission of the Alliance in Afghanistan. The Czech Republic has established a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the Logar province in June 2008. Besides the 200 soldiers and the 10 civilian experts operating in Logar, the Czech Republic also supports a field hospital in Kabul.[21] Slovakia has, as of June 2008, about 60 personnel in Kandahar province.[22] This number is to rise to 246 by 2009 following the vote in the Slovak Parliament on June 19, 2008.[23]

Avenues for Future Research

This dissertation has examined the process of compliance with NATO and EU conditionality from the perspective of countries becoming members of the institutions.

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[20] Jiří Šedivý, "Brave New Europeans? New Europe and EU Foreign Policy," in *The Perfect Union? New Europe and the EU*, ed. Roger Gough and Anna Reid (London, UK: Policy Exchange Limited, 2004), 73, http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/libimages/151.pdf (accessed January 15, 2008).

[21] Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic, "Current Deployments: NATO Operation in Afghanistan," July 7, 2008, http://www.army.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=6568 (accessed July 20, 2008).

[22] Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, "ISAF Operation, Afghanistan," http://www.mosr.sk/isaf (accessed July 20, 2008).

[23] "Slovak Parliament Agrees to Further Increase Number of Troops in Afghanistan," Associated Press, June 19, 2008, http://news.uk.msn.com/article.aspx?cp-documentid=8658328&imageindex=10 (accessed June 25, 2008).

Having determined the importance of conditionality in the pre-accession stage, it is now necessary to consider the issue of durability of this change from a theoretical perspective. The time that has elapsed since the 1999 round of NATO enlargement and the 2004 EU enlargement is long enough to begin to ask questions as to how solid and irreversible the transformation has been in the new member countries and how we should study the interaction between interests and norms after membership conditionality is removed from the equation once a candidate state becomes a member state. Signs have appeared that challenge the depth of internalization of the "rules of the game" espoused by the post-communist NATO and EU member states.

Several recent developments in the Czech Republic and Slovakia have challenged the notion of durability of the democratic transformation and of the post-membership conditionality of NATO and the EU. To illustrate, the Czech Republic experienced almost six months without a government in the aftermath of the 2006 parliamentary elections, caused by the close results. The Civic Democrats (ODS) won 35.38% of the vote, and the Social Democrats (ČSSD) ended up in a close second position with 32.32%.[24] On one hand, the country remained stable during the six-month period of cross-party deliberations and, the norm of anti-communism remained strong enough to prevent the ČSSD from forming a coalition with the Communist Party (KSČM) in search for parliamentary majority. On the other hand, the fact that the ruling coalition between the ODS, the Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL), and the Greens (SZ) was formed only as a result of a defection of two Social Democratic deputies led to

[24] "Election to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Held on 2. - 3.6.2006," http://www.volby.cz/pls/ps2006/ps2?xjazyk=EN (accessed July 20, 2008).

resentment of the Czech political culture and lack of trust in the political system within a large portion of the electorate.

Recent developments in Slovakia also raise the question regarding the depth and durability of the domestic changes post-membership. For example, the fact that Vladimír Mečiar's HZDS became a member of the ruling coalition following the 2006 parliamentary elections points in the direction of NATO and EU conditionality no longer having as dramatic effect over Slovakia's political development as prior to membership. Slovakia has also marked an increasingly polarizing debate on the influence of the EU on domestic decision-making. While the Czech Republic has had, as a result of the presence of Eurosceptics on its political scene, such a debate from the mid-1990s, the debate on EU-related issues did not emerge in Slovakia until membership was granted. Until then, the debate was more about NATO and the EU being a solution to Slovakia's democratic deficit, international ostracism, and economic struggles rather than a problem from the perspective of the actual NATO and EU-related issues.

The critical view of NATO and especially of the EU emerged prior to the 2006 parliamentary elections. It has been upheld primarily by Prime Minister Robert Fico and his political party Smer (i.e. "Direction"), with Fico's rhetoric defending the Slovak national interest against the directives of the EU. Criticism of the EU has also come from the Slovak Christian Democrats (KDU). This criticism has been directed against the "secular, and consumerist, nature of the West European Society," and it has been visible in the demand to include references to God in the European Constitution.[25]

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[25] Karen Henderson, "Referendum Briefing No. 7: The Slovak EU Accession Referendum 16-17 May 2003," EPERN, http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/documents/epernbrefslovak.pdf (accessed September 12, 2008), 10.

EU-related issues have increasingly become hostage to domestic politics in Slovakia, a common phenomenon across all EU member states. Slovakia has been suffering from a "complete breakdown in communication" between the government of Robert Fico and the opposition. The ruling coalition has used its majority to undo many reforms instituted by the Dzurinda government. The lack of cooperation between the government and the opposition has been a worrisome sign, especially considering Slovakia's recent experience with authoritarian rule of the Mečiar governments.

Bulgaria and Romania, who became EU members in 2007, can also serve as good examples for the discussion of internalization of institutional norms and rules. On July 23, 2008, the EU Commission issued reports critical of the two countries' judicial reform and the fight against corruption. The report on Bulgaria also condemned the country's inability to tackle organized crime and the wide-spread fraud and high-level corruption linked to the management of funds granted by the EU. The Commission recognized Bulgaria's progress in establishing necessary institutions and procedures for dealing with the aforementioned issues, but it concluded that there were "few results to demonstrate that the system is actually functioning."[26] It called the lack of results "striking" and demanded for the shortcomings to be addressed "urgently."[27] The Commission went as far as suspending infrastructure funding worth as much as $700 million and withdrawing the accreditation for two government agencies that oversee pre-accession funds.[28] While

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[26] Commission of the European Union Communities, "Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Progress in Bulgaria under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism" (July 23, 2008): 2, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/cvm/docs/bulgaria_report_20080723_en.pdf (accessed July 30, 2008).
[27] Ibid., 5.
[28] "More Efforts Needed by Bulgaria and Romania to Tackle Judicial Reform and Corruption," *Europa*, July 23, 2008, http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/1195&format=HTML&aged=0&language=

Romania escaped sanctions, the Commission urged the country "to cleanse the system of corruption and to fully respect the rule of law" through an "unequivocal and renewed commitment...at all levels."[29] The attempt or lack thereof on the part of Bulgarian and Romania leadership to remedy the shortcomings captured in the reports will undoubtedly present valuable material for further study of NATO and EU conditionality post-membership.

All the above-mentioned developments lead to questions as to how the behavior of the new members will develop and whether it will increasingly resemble that of older member states. The 3% rule for budget deficit for members of the euro zone is an obvious example of the defiance of the EU on the part of traditional member states, such Germany, France, and Italy. Similarly, the use of national caveats on the part of many member states to minimize their military contribution to NATO operations has plagued NATO's effectiveness. Tensions in domestic politics are likely to hold NATO and EU-related issues hostage in the new member states, as witnessed by the disagreements among the Czech and Slovak political actors. The evaluation of interests and norms in the context of further integration is likely to continue, as the tension between institutional deepening and the defense of national interest is bound to increase in light of the ever more complex changes proposed by the EU and of NATO's current and future military operations and decisions regarding enlargement. Domestic decision-makers will be ever more susceptible to popular pressure, as demonstrated by the demise of the Dzurinda

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EN (accessed August 15, 2008); and "Balkan Blushes: Bulgaria, Romania and the EU," *The Economist* (July 26, 2008), 62-63.

[29] Commission of the European Union Communities, "Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Progress in Romania under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism" (July 23, 2008): 7, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/cvm/docs/romania_report_20080723_en.pdf (accessed July 30, 2008).

government in 2006. By the 2006 elections, the Dzurinda coalition was "more popular with the Commission in Brussels than with the Slovak public opinion."[30] The sweeping reforms that the Dzurinda government had instituted to take the country to NATO and the EU were often perceived negatively by the population, which led to the rise of a new class of populist leaders, namely the current Prime Minister Robert Fico.

The examples above as well as the research presented in the case studies underline the complexity of state behavior. States and the state-level actors are driven by a multitude of objectives, some competing and others complementary. The choices are often too disparate to allow for an acceptable compromise, which can lead to a behavior deemed unacceptable by other states or institutions. The case of Slovakia's temporary absence from European integration illustrates this point in a poignant way. Theory needs to appropriately address this complexity and the tensions involved.

We should keep in mind that those instances where a single theory is unable to explain empirical phenomenon is not a sign of failure of the particular theory. Rather, it is a proof of the complexity of state behavior. The two rivaling explanations presented in this study — systemic and value-transfer — both have real explanatory power capable of accounting for much of state behavior. However, when we acknowledge that the two interact and that behavior is government by a combination of both the logic of consequentiality and the logic of appropriateness, we can gain a deeper understanding of state choices, as was the case of the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and the EU.

The study of both interest and norm-driven dynamic will become ever more relevant for the institutional context of NATO and the EU. Despite the highly regulated nature of the two institutions, deepening and widening of NATO and EU's agendas are

[30] Rupnik, "Joining Europe together or separately?," 44.

likely to cause further competition between interests and norms. Moreover, with the new members becoming more comfortable in the institutional environment and more aware of their objectives, we can expect them to be less eager to support certain measure of deepening than when they were standing in front of the door of the two institutions. Membership has changed the power balance between the institutions and the states, with power shifting away from the institution and towards the member state. The institution no longer possesses the same amount of leverage to solicit compliance as was the case with membership conditionality. On the contrary, the new member states have gained leverage over the institutions, stemming from the principle of unanimity in NATO and EU decision-making. They are now empowered to withhold consent if proposed polices are in conflict with national interest.

Czech Euroscepticism serves to illustrate the recent trend on the part of the new member states regarding the tensions between national and institutional interests and norms. The Czech leadership, represented by President Václav Klaus, has been reluctant to endorse any firm plans for the implementation of the euro, arguing instead for maintaining control over the country's monetary and fiscal policy. More importantly for the future of European integration, the Czech leadership has not been positively inclined toward the EU's Lisbon Treaty. Many Czech leaders have criticized the fact that the changes proposed in the Treaty would result in the loss of a third of the country's current votes in the Council of Ministers as well as the subordination of national law to the European law.[31] Both issues have been presented to the Czech public from the perspective of national sovereignty and identity by the country's leaders.

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[31] Jan Richter, "Czech Troubles with the Lisbon Treaty," *Czech Radio*, July 1, 2008, http://www.radio.cz/en/article/105674 (accessed July 20, 2008).

Leadership, Interests, and Norms

This dissertation examines the intersection of international and domestic politics, represented by NATO and EU membership conditionality and compliance on the part of the applicant states. It contributes to the debate between the rationalist and constructivist explanations of state behavior as they relate to compliance with conditionality. The study makes the following argument: Successful compliance with NATO and EU conditionality is decisively determined by the extent to which leaders perceive compliance with institutional norms and rules to be in their interest, as well as by the extent to which their normative stance is aligned with the norms endorsed by NATO and the EU.

Conditionality is defined as the strategy of an international institution to promote compliance with institutional norms and rules on the part of national governments; compliance is defined as the extent to which national governments act in accordance with and in fulfillment of the conditions prescribed by international institutions. The EU defined its conditions for membership in the framework of the so-called Copenhagen Criteria of 1993; NATO established membership conditionality in the 1995 "Study on NATO Enlargement." NATO and EU membership conditionality is voluntary in nature, which means that the two institutions provide "carrots" rather than "sticks" to encourage compliance. The voluntary nature causes a great degree of asymmetry between the two institutions on one hand and the applicants on the other hand, with NATO and the EU having leverage over the enlargement process and the candidates. While this dissertation contains a discussion on the genesis of NATO and EU membership conditionality and the similarities and differences between NATO and EU conditions for membership, it does not draw a distinction between the two institutions and their application of conditionality.

This is due to the fact that this study focuses on the democratic aspects of membership conditionality, a point where NATO and EU approach is virtually indistinguishable. Moreover, the discussion centers on the level of the candidate states, since that is where compliance takes place. The Czech Republic and Slovakia serve as the case studies in this dissertation.

This study addresses the following two questions: How do international and domestic politics interact? Why did the Czech Republic and Slovakia experience differences in the process of complying with NATO and EU conditionality? It argues that leadership in the candidate states is the key intervening variable in the process of translating NATO and EU membership conditionality into compliance. Leaders function as transmission belts due to their ability to shape policies on the domestic level. They can encourage or delay compliance by supporting or obstructing policies associated with conditionality. Moreover, this dissertation proposes that the state's response to conditionality entails a mix of interest-driven and norm-driven behavior. The likelihood of compliance is high if national leaders consider compliance to be in their interest and if they perceive it as "the right thing to do." By the same token, the likelihood of compliance is low if it threatens to undermine the interests of leaders and if the leaders lack a normative framework aligned with the norms of NATO and the EU. Leaders function as a filter for interests and norms, since the acceptance and promotion of some interests and norms at the expense of others by the leaders determine state behavior.

This study takes an issue with the traditional dichotomy between the rationalist and constructivist explanations of state behavior. The rationalist approach stresses the importance of the logic of consequence in determining state behavior. Based on this

logic, states perform cost-benefit analysis of their options and follow those courses of action where their interests and benefits are likely to be maximized. Any type of norm-conforming behavior is considered to be a result of instrumentalization, which consists of advocating norms for the purpose of serving interest. The constructivist approach, on the other hand, claims that states respond to the logic of appropriateness. Constructivists regard norms as independent variables, and they argue that states follow norms rather interests because they consider it the right thing to do. Furthermore, constructivists claim that states get socialized into the appropriate forms of behavior. As the case studies presented in this dissertation demonstrate, state behavior is driven by a mix of interests and norms.

This dissertation evaluates the presence or absence of norms and interests by performing content analysis of sources such as the speeches given by the Czech and Slovak leaders, party platforms, and government declarations. This approach is complemented by the use of process tracing, which takes the timing of events and actions into consideration when evaluating behavior. NATO and EU enlargement was marked by several milestones that influenced the level of compliance. These milestones included, for example, NATO and EU summits and the various mechanisms for evaluating the level of compliance.

The Czech Republic and Slovakia serve as the case studies for illustrating the process of compliance with NATO and EU membership conditionality and the interplay of interests and norms. The two countries are ideal cases because of the geographical proximity and shared history that characterize them. The 75 years that the two nations existed together as the state of Czechoslovakia (1918-1993) have led to significant

similarities in the two countries' institutional structures and socio-economic indicators. Despite these similarities, the two countries experienced differences on their way to NATO and the EU: While the Czech Republic was a frontrunner in the process of western integration, as evidenced by its 1999 NATO membership, Slovakia encountered difficulties along the way. Slovakia's entry into NATO was delayed until 2004, and it found it its accession to the EU more complex than the Czech Republic. During the reign of Vladimír Mečiar as Slovakia's Prime Minister in 1993-1998, Slovakia failed to fulfill the democratic aspects of NATO and EU conditionality. As a result of violations of democratic principles by the Mečiar governments, NATO and the EU sidelined Slovakia from the process of European integration. Slovakia corrected its course following the installation of a pro-democratic government in the aftermath of the 1998 parliamentary elections, which saw the defeat of Mečiar's authoritarian rule.

The differences between the Czech and the Slovak cases dwell in the level to which the interests and norms advocated by the Czech and Slovak leaders were aligned with NATO and EU conditionality. The successive Czech administrations displayed moderate to high level of interest and norm alignment, resulting in moderate to high level of compliance. The Czech Republic can be termed an easy case of compliance with conditionality. Slovakia, on the other hand, displayed minimal compliance during the rule of the successive Mečiar coalitions. NATO and EU conditionality failed in Slovakia in 1993-1998 as a result of the lack of alignment of the leaders' interests and norms with those of NATO and EU. Nevertheless, we can term Slovakia a case of "delayed conditionality," since NATO and the EU were instrumental in influencing the results of

the 1998 parliamentary elections by encouraging the Mečiar opposition to unite and by threatening further isolation of the country.

The disparate level of interest and norm alignment among the Czech and Slovak post-communist leaders stemmed from dissimilar historical experiences during the communist era, related namely to the events of the Prague Spring of 1968 and the ensuing period of normalization. The Czech Republic experienced a significant turnover of elites after 1989, with a large portion of the communist leadership being replaced by former dissidents and internally exiled technocrats. This new elite assumed a staunchly pro-western, pro-democratic, and pro-reform attitude, which was translated into an elite-level consensus regarding the necessity and desirability of NATO and EU membership. The Czech leaders established a normative framework centered on the "return to Europe" immediately following the end of the communist regime. Once this direction was established, the leaders used interest-driven arguments to advocate membership. These arguments included, for example, security benefits, access to resources, economic wellbeing, and improved business transparency. This alignment of norms and interests resulted in the Czech Republic joining NATO in 1998 and becoming an EU member in 2004.

Slovakia, on the other hand, displayed minimal alignment of norms and interests on the part of its leaders with NATO and EU norms and rules in the period 1993-1998. The country was characterized by a much greater continuity of elites following the fall of communism, with reform communists remaining in power. During the premiership of Vladimír Mečiar, Slovakia exhibited a wide gulf between elite rhetoric and policies. While the official statements and declarations hailed democracy, the reality marked

affronts against the democratic principles of NATO and the EU in the areas of minority and constitutional rights, which attracted wide criticism from NATO and the EU. Even though this criticism failed to correct the behavior of the Mečiar government, it contributed to its demise by unifying the opposition, which went to win the 1998 and 2002 parliamentary elections. The 1998 and 2002 coalition governments displayed a high level of interest and norm alignment with NATO and EU conditionality, resulting in high level of compliance and ultimately in Slovakia's 2004 NATO and EU membership.

The case studies confirm the hypothesis regarding the importance of domestic leadership in the process of compliance with conditionality. Moreover, they validate the notion of both interests and norms informing state behavior. Interests play a primary role due to the magnanimity of tasks associated with conditionality and the benefits stemming from membership. At the same time, the presence of a normative framework provides an important facilitating function. The normative framework established very early on by the Czech leadership delineated the course towards democratic transformation and supported compliance in those instances that required the interests to be redefined to allow for compliance. Slovakia lacked a similar normative framework at the outset of its independence, but its gradual formation contributed in an important way to the demise of the authoritarian regime and, ultimately, to compliance with NATO and EU membership conditionality.

The interaction and competition of interests and norms will continue to be closely linked to the issue of leadership. This can be both a positive and a negative development. On the positive note, continued socialization into the norms and values promulgated by NATO and the EU will likely increase stability of countries that once displayed volatile

behavior due to the skilful manipulation of norms and ideals by state leaders. On the other hand, tensions between the aims of integration on one side and national interest and identity on the other side of the spectrum can lead to the weakening of cohesion within NATO and the EU. Leadership will play a crucial role in harmonizing national interest and identity with the developments in the Alliance and the EU.

The complex dynamics of the interaction between institutions and states strengthens the case for a more nuanced approach to the study of the role played by interests and norms. A close observation of the behavior of the new NATO and EU member states can shed light on the linkages between material and ideational preferences. Through membership, the new member states have been transformed from the object to the subject of NATO and EU decision-making, which provides them with the opportunities to channel their preferences and shape NATO and EU policies.[32] The process of defining these preferences on the domestic level and their advocacy on the institutional level lends itself to further conceptualization of the intersection of normative and rational explanations of state behavior.

The empirical phenomena will continue to provide the field of international relations theory with challenging issues. The two case studies serve as examples of how rationalist and normative choices interact in the area of compliance with institutional conditionality. Moreover, they demonstrate the importance of examining issues below the systemic level of analysis and studying the dynamics within the candidate countries for a firm grasp of the workings of conditionality. Rationalists should not disregard the normative aspects of choices and behavior displayed by states and individual state actors.

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[32] Vladimír Bilčík, "Slovakia and the European Union," in *Slovakia 2005: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora, Miroslav Kollár, and Grigorij Mesežnikov (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 2006), 299-315.

Constructivists, on the other hand, would gain strength by accepting the existence of rational and instrumental behavior, especially if such behavior stems from norms and identity, as was the case in the Czech and Slovak accession to NATO and the EU. If we were to stick to theoretical parsimony, we would miss the often subtle combination of consequentialist logic and logic of appropriateness. This dissertation supports the move to a more nuanced use of theory. Leaning away from using a single "super theory" allows us to gain insight into the complexities of state behavior that go beyond both the traditional rationalist and the constructivist explanatory power.

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